THE SAINTS COMFORT,

In all, but more especially in Evil

TIMES.

Drawn from Twelve Several Texts of Scripture; which are briefly explained in this small Piece.

By *T. G. Minister of the Gospel.*

Isa. 51. 3. *For the Lord shall comfort* Zion: *he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her Wilderness like* Eden, *and her desart like the Garden of the* Lord; *joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of Melody.*

Isa. 66. 13. *As one whom his Mother comforteth, so will I comfort you: And ye shall be comforted in* Jerusalem.

London, Printed for *John Harris* at the *Harrow* over against the *Church* in the *Poultry*, 1685.

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To the

CHRISTIAN

READER.

I,

THis Meſſage and this Comfort are preſented to you. ods Royal Scepter is ſtretched rth, the Earth trembles at his ajeſty. Read his Name upon

Isa.

Lon

on his Rod and Holiness upon his Scepter. *We would all be happy, no happiness without holiness. As for the Matter of this Mite cast into the Treasury, we must know it is cloathed with the Authority of Heaven, though in a course Apparel. We are not to look into the Son of Man, a base clod as in the Earth, but eye what God says by man: Take it as in the naked simplicity of the Gospel. To you I speak who ever had, or now may have, or wished for, a heart as a Chronicle of the love of God, a Register of experience, an Account Book of their own Sins, there being some who wear out the Pavement of the World with their feet, and never*

never touch it with their knees. Satan setting back the Clock of time, Young men take Pleasure in your Youth, ye have the Key of your own heart in your own hand, ye may repent when ye will; Esau *found it otherwise*, sought it with Tears and could not find it. *The date and day of Grace to be expired, is a sad businesse; terms of mercy are gone. Gods Ware-house is above, his Work-house below. Our Task* is to wash the heart from Wickedness, *Jer.* 4. 14. *Wash it with Tears, sweep it with Repentance, beautify it with Holiness, perfume it with Prayer, deck it with Grace, hang it round with*

with Sincerity, get the Image *of Gods Stamp upon thy Conscience.*

Your Servant

In the Lord,

T. G.

THE Saints Comfort.

A Propriety in God a Peoples Chiefest Happiness: From

Psal. 144. *vers.* last.

Happy is that people that is in such a case, yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord.

THat a Peoples chiefest Felicity consisteth in a Propriety in, and Communion with God as his Lord.

Psal. 33. 12. *Blessed is that Nation whose God is the Lord, and the People whom he hath chosen for his Inheritance.*

Psal. 65. 4. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest that he ap-*

proach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts.

Psal. 140. 5. *Blessed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.*

The Truth of it further appeareth by these Arguments.

1. A Believer is Heaven-born, and nothing but a heavenly Happiness will sute with him; 1 *John* 5. 4. He is Spiritual and Heavenly; and Earthly Blessings are too low for him; *Eph.* 1. 3. *Who hath blessed us with all Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly places.*

2. A Believer esteems nothing his proper own but his God. God is his All.

As having nothing, yet possessing all things, for his God is all and in all to him.

3. A blessed Believing Soul is most delighted and affected with the God of his Mercies, then Mercies from his God. *David*, Psal. 59. in two several Verses exalts in the God of his Mercies.

4. The Joy a Blessed Soul hath in God exceed the Joy of all Creature Excellencies and Glories, *Psal.* 4. *Lord lift up the light of thy Countenance. I shall be more glad then they that have great increase of Corn or Oyl.*

5. The lastingness of this Felicity, it outlives and outlasts all other Happiness;

is Life Eternal to know God and Christ; *Joh.* 17. 3. *I have seen an end of all Perfections, but thy Law is exceeding broad*; Psal. 119.

Thy Love is better than Life.

Propriety in God is the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God; its the durable Riches and long Life, its a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away.

The Consideration of the Happiness of Propriety in God, may teach us these Six Lessons.

1. To Contemplate and Commiserate the happiless Condition of the Godless People; read their happiless Estate; *Eph.* 2. 12: they are graceless, faithless, covenantless, Christless, hopeless, lifeless, merciless, heavenless, helpless, and without Mercy prevent, eternally remediless, and their Pain and Torment easeless and endless.

2. Learn to give all diligence to make sure with Interest in God; 1 *Pet. Give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.*

3. Enter into search of your Hearts, and try your Interest you have, or pretend to have in God.

1. Do your Hearts long after Communion according to?

2. Are your Hearts sensible of the Superexcellency of Interest in God.

3. Do you see a vast difference between earthly and heavenly Interest, so as you had rather be one day in the Courts of Gods House then a thousand elsewhere.

4. Had you rather chuse to enjoy God, then Mercies from your God? Had you rather enjoy God then pardon of Sin, freedom from Hell, or enjoyment of; as one said, I had rather be in Hell with God, then in Heaven without him.

5. Do you improve the uttermost of your abilities and diligence in seeking to have Communion with God; using all means tending thereto?

6. Do you delight n the Company of those that are in Communion with God, turning into the Foot-steps of the Flocks of his Companions; *Cant.* If so, assure your Hearts you are not far from the Kingdom of God.

4 *Lesson.* Learn to maintain Interest and Propriety in God, *If God be your Father, pass the time of your Sojourning here in fear*; 1 Pet. *If I be a Father, where is my honour? and if I be a Master, where is my fear?*

5 *Lesson.*

5 *Leſſon.* Let the Conſideration of Propriety and Intereſt in God as a Father, a Husband, a Maſter, teach us to maintain our ſeveral Relations. Doubtleſs the Grace of God teacheth to enjoy outward Relations in the Lord: The unbelieving Husband is ſanctified to the believing Wife, and ſo is the unbelieving Wife to the believing Husband, and ſo Parents and Children, Maſter and Servants Propriety in God teacheth a true right and propriety in Relations: Spiritual Community admitteth of no Carnal Community of Women, mention'd *Revelations*, The Doctrine of the *Nicolaitaines*, which I hate, ſaith the Lord.

6 *Leſſon.* Be content with your preſent Condition: Be it ever ſo mean, poor, or ſtraight, if God be your God there ſhall be no want. The Lord will give Grace and Glory, and *no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly*; Pſal. 84. 11. *Yea the Lions ſhall ſuffer hunger, but there ſhall be no want to them that fear the Lord*; Pſal. 34. 9. Having him, you have all, Chriſt is yours, Heaven is yours, *Paul*, *Apollo*, *Cephas*, Life, Death, Gifts, Graces, the World, Relations, all is yours, as you are Gods and Chriſts, *and he that hath given us Chriſt, how ſhould he not with him give us all things*; Rom. 8. 32.

The strait Gate and narrow Way.

Matth. 7. 14.

Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to Life, and few there be that find it.

For our better Instruction, its necessary these Five Queries be Answered or Resolved by Scripture.

1. *What the way that leadeth to life is?*
2. *What is the gate, door, or entrance thereto?*
3. *Why the way and gate to life is strait and narrow?*
4. *Why there are so few that find the way to life?*
5. *Who they be that find the way to life?*

1 Query. *What is the way that leadeth to life?*

It is Jesus Christ, Gods Righteousness. *I am the way, the truth, and the life,* saith Christ, *John* 14. 6. and saith Wisdom of Christ, *Prov.* 8. 20. *I lead in the way of Righteousness*; Chap. 12. 28. *In the way of Righteousness is life*; Isa. 45. 24. *Surely shall one say in the Lord I have Righteousness,* 1. Christ

1. Christ Jesus is the way of Man to God; God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself; *Joh.* 14. 6. *No man cometh to the Father but by me*, saith Christ.

2. Christ is the way of God to man, and therefore *great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifest in the flesh*; 1 Tim. 3. 16. Christ is the way of God to man in his Righteousness for us, manifested in the flesh for us, and he is the way of Man to God in his Righteousness in the Spirit manifested in us; *For through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father*; Eph. 2. 18. Chap. 3. 12.

2 Query. *What is the gate, door, or entrance into life?*

Christ Jesus the Son of God and our alone Saviour, is also the gate, door, or entrance, into Eternal Life; *Joh.* 10. *I am the door, by me if any man enter he shall be saved*, saith Christ Jesus. In his God-head, or Divinity, or considered as God-Man, he is the only way to Life; and in his Humanity, or as being Man-God, he is the door, gate, or entrance thereinto.

David in Spirit saith of him on this wise; *Psal.* 118. 19, 20. *Open to me the Gates of Righteousness, I will go into them, this is the*

Gate of the Lord, into which the Righteous shall enter.

Rev. 3. 8. *Behold I have set before thee an open door, and none can shut it.*

Christ Jesus is a two-fold Door, or a Gate with two leaves, a two-leaved Gate of Righteousness.

1. In his Death and Sufferings he was an open Door of Reconciliation, Redemption, and Remission, through the Door or Vail of his Flesh, that is to say his Sufferings. For without Blood no Remission.

How was his Body opened, the Vail of his Flesh rent, that so Man might have an entrance into Life? How was this Door thrown off the Hinges, that Man might hang the faster on? How was this sure Nail fasten'd in a sure place not to be removed, that Man might be eternally established and never removed; *Isa.* 22. 23, 25.

2. In those free openings, unfoldings, ministrations and dispensations of his Spirit in us, is he also an open Door; thus is he in Spirit to all his an open Door: A Door of Faith, a Door of Hope, a Door of Revelation, a Door of Peace and Eternal Consolation; a Door of Utterance and Manifestation of the Spirit. When *Paul* came to *Troas a Door was opened to him of the Lord*; 2 Cor. 2. 12. *And a Door of Faith was opened*

to the Gentiles; Acts 14. 27. This is the open Door set before us, which no Man can shut, which *he that hath the Key of* David, *openeth, and no man can shut, and shutteth, and no man can open*; Rev. 3. 7, 8.

3 Query. *Why the way and gate to life is strait and narrow?*

1. Because of the narrow-heartedness of Man; for not any thing of Life Eternal, or tending or relating thereto is strait or narrow; for saith *David*, *Psalm* 119. 96. *Thy Commandements are exceeding broad*: and saith *Micah*, *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitned?* Cap. 2. 7. And *Paul* speaking of the Spirits inlargement which was in him, and his Fellow Ministers, tells the *Corinthians*; *Ye are not straitned in us, but you are straitned in your own Bowels*; 2 Cor. 6. 12. So that 'tis by reason of the straitnedness of Mans heart, that any thing of God, Christ, or Eternal Life is strait: *For my ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts; but as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my ways than your ways, saith the Lord*, Isa. 55. 8, 9.

2. The way to Life, or the Mysteries of Life and Salvation, are very strait to the proud, whose heart is lifted up; *Psal.* 10. 4, 5.

The

The wicked through the pride of his heart will not seek after God; his ways are always grievous to him: Thy judgments are far above, out of his sight; he is too high swollen, too big hearted, then to come under the simplicity of Christ and the Gospel.

3. The way to Life is narrow and strait to a loose, prophane and extravagant Soul; such a one must have Elbow room to sin, Christ and his Commands, the Gospel and Spirit, Godliness, Righteousness, and all that relate to Eternal Life, are too strict: *Come, say they, let's break his bonds and cast away his Cords, our tongues are our own, what Lord shall controul us?* Psal. 2. 3. and 12. 4.

4. The way to Life is strait and narrow to such as God with-draws those inlargements, or draws in himself as a just reward for their Rebellions and Backslidings from the Lord.

Behold the Lords hand is not straitned that it cannot save, but your Iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you; Hosea 2. 5, 6. *She hath played the Harlot, for she said, I will go after my Lovers which gave me my Bread and my Water, my Wooll and my Flocks, my Oil and my Drink. Therefore behold I will hedg up her way, and make a Wall that she shall not find her paths.*

4. Query.

4 Query. *Why there are ſo few that find the way to Life?*

1. Few do find, becauſe few do mind the way, few know and are ſenſible that they are out of the way; few know whether they are in the right way, or ſuſpect whether they are in the wrong.

2. Few do find, becauſe few do ſeek; few are there that ask the way to *Zion* with their Faces thitherward.

3. Few do find, becauſe few are right Seekers: There be many ſhall ſeek to enter in, but ſhall not be able, becauſe they ſeek amiſs, when they ſeek 1. By a falſe Light, 2. In a falſe Strength, 3. To falſe Ends.

1. Few do find Life, becauſe few do ſeek in the true Light but in a falſe Light; few ſeek Chriſt in his own Light, in the Diſpenſations of his own Spirit of Light: But do rather kindle Fires of their own, and walk in the Light of their own, *Iſa.* 50. laſt. *They ſeek life by their own habitual, traditional and acquired knowledge, but few ſeek in the light of the Word and Spirit*; Pſal. 119. 105. *Thy word*, ſays *David*, *is a light to my Feet, a blazing light to my Path*; and again *Pſal.* 36 9. *In the light ſhall we ſee light.* The World by Wiſdom knows not God, the natural man per-

perceives not the things of God, because they are Spiritually discerned, but the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God.

2. Few find Life, because few seek Life in Gods strength, but trust to their own performances and Duties, works of the Law; and so they be much and frequent in external Duties, they are satisfied, but mind not from what Principle they Act: Like the Young Man in the Gospel, *Good Master what shall I do to inherit Life?* But when Jesus came to the Spiritual part of the Law of Works, Faith, Self Denial, Resignation, giving up his own Reason, Righteousness, Life, then he went away sorrowful.

3. Few find the way to Life, because few do seek upon good Grounds and holy Ends; but some self end in all their seekings.

Such as seek Heaven for Heaven only, or because they had rather be happy than miserable, shall miss of Heaven. *Baalim* desired to die the death of the Righteous, and that his last end might be like his.

How many were there sought after Christ for the Wonders and for the Loaves, but few sought him because he was the Christ?

Many seek to Christ as a Saviour, few seek him to be their Soveraign.

Many

Many acknowledg his Death for them, few seek for the Life of Jesus to be manifested in them.

Many follow after the Name and Fame of Christ, few are close followers of the steps of Christ.

Many would sit on the Throne with Christ.

Many would have the Crown, few care much for the Cross.

5 Query. *Who be those few that find Life?*

1. The *New born*, Matt. 18. 3, 4. John 3. 5. *Except a Man be born of Water and of Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. That which is born of flesh is flesh.*

Flesh and Blood shall not inherit Life.

2. Spiritual Fools shall find the way to Life, the high way to Heaven shall be made so plain that the Wayfaring Men though Fools shall not err therein, *Isa.* 35. 8.

He that will be wise, Heavenly wise, must become a *fool that he may be wise*; 1 Cor. 3. 18.

3. The Godly or Spiritual Poor are the few that shall find Life; *Jam.* 2. 5. *The Poor of this World rich in Faith and Heirs of the Kingdom.*

4. The

4. The Lords blind ſhall find the way, *Iſa.* 42. 16. *I will bring the blind by a way they knew not, I will lead them in paths they have not known,* verſ. 19. *Who is blind but my Servant.*

5. *The ſcatter'd and purg'd remnant ſhall find,* Zech. 13. 8, 9.

A few ſcatter'd and frighted remnant ſhall give Glory to the God of Heaven, Rev. 11. 13.

6. Thoſe few who are weary of their own wandrings ſhall find reſt to their Souls; *Matth.* 11. laſt.

7. Patient Waiters ſhall find life, read *Prov.* 8. 34, 35.

8. Unwearied Seekers ſhall find, and Groſs-bearers ſhall find.

Chriſt Jeſus the only Way.

John XIV. 6.

I am the Way.

Obſervation.

THat the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the only Way of Man to God.

For the better opening this Goſpel Truth; I ſhall by Scripture ſhew:

1. *Why*

1. *Why Christ is the only way?*

2. *How or in what respect he is the way?*

3. *The Terms from what and to what Christ is the way to God?*

4. *Properties demonstrating what manner of Way Christ is?*

1. *The Reasons grounded upon Scripture, Why Christ Jesus is the only way?*

1. Because he was so appointed of the Father before the World was. 1 *Pet.* 1. 20. *Who was fore-ordained before the foundation of the World, but manifest in these last times for you.*

2. Because he was appointed, so anointed for the same purpose, *Isa.* 61. 1. *With the Oyl of gladness above his Fellows*, Heb. 1. 9.

3. That Gods Covenant with Man might be established, which was the Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents Head, and Mans designed Redemption wrought.

4. Because Man must have been eternally miserable, but for this way; for that it was not in Man to direct his way Godward or Heaven-ward, *Jer.* 10. 20.

5. Because by this means or way, Man might become capable of returning to his first Innocent Life and Subordination to his God

God and Creator, *by Christ who is made of God to be his Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*; 1 Cor. 1.

6. That Divine Justice might be satisfied, whose Righteous *Law* was, Man had sinned, and Man must die. It pleased the Father to satisfie himself in this way, he beheld the Travel of his Son, and was satisfied, *Isa.* 53. 11.

7. There was no way of access to, and acceptance with God, but in the way of his Son. Man, whole Mankind was lost, there was no Man. I looked, and there was no Man could be found worthy to be a Day's-Man or Mediator, and the Angels, some fell from their first Estate, and became Ministers of Darkness, and tempted Man to Fall; and for those Angels that fell not, but kept their first Estate, they were the Ministring Spirits sent forth from God, and *he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of* Abraham, *that so he might be a merciful Mediator or High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People*; Heb. 2. 16, 17.

8. That all Men might *honour the Son as they honour the Father*; John 5. 23. *When he brings forth his Son* [the God head united to the Man-hood] he saith, *And let all the Angels of God Worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. 2. *Par-*

2. *Particular how or in what respect Christ Jesus is the only way of Man to God.*

1. In his Blessed Incarnation, the Word became, was made, assumed, took Flesh, or united to the Humanity, thereby to reduce or bring it back again to God, and without any doubt or controversie its a Truth to be believed in without any gain-saying, or controverted by Men of corrupt minds. *Great is the mistery of Godliness, God was manifest in the Flesh*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. And that for this most blessed end and purpose of reconciling Man to God. *God was in Christ reconciling the World of mankind to God.*

2. In his whole Conversation on Earth, was he a way of Holiness, a perfect Pattern of Righteousness, and true Holiness for mans Imitation. *Learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, saith Christ; a light that enlighteneth every Man that comes into the World, that all men following this most perfect Example of light and perfection, might thereby be in the way to life.*

3. *In his bitter Death and Passion was he a way for mans reconcilation; for while we were Enemies, we were reconciled by the Death of his Son*, Rom. 5. 10.

4. In his Resurrection Christ is the way for mans Faith, Confirmation and Justification: *If we believe on him that raised Jesus from*

the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification; Rom. 4. 24 25.

5. By his glorious Intercession at the right hand of God, is he the way *whereby he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for us*, Heb. 7. 25. And that

1. by appearing for us, *Heb.* 9. 24. *For Christ is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the the Figures of the true; but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*

2. By his Sacrifice once offered, *Heb.* 10. 12,13. *But this man after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his Enemies be made his foot-stool.*

3. By his Prayer for us, and all that believe, which Prayer is certainly heard, *John* 17. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.* All Believers that were, are, or ever shall be, do injoy the benefit of Christs Prayer and Intercession.

4. By his own Spirit in the hearts of Believers, and in their Prayers doth he make Intercession for us, *Rom.* 8. 26. *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities, for we know not what we should Pray for as we ought: but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us with groan-*

groanings that cannot be uttered: Read v. 27. *In all these Considerations of his Intercession Christ is a way of Man to God.*

6. In the Ministrations of his Spirit; his holy Spirit of promise, is he the only way of Man to God, and so is he the way of Regeneration, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification. Read these places, *Heb.* 2. 10, 11. *John* 17 9. 2 *Thes.* 2. 13. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2.

3. *Particular, The Terms from what and to what the Lord Jesus is considered, as the only way of Man to God.*

1. Christ is a way from darkness to light, and from Satans Power to Gods. Read *Eph.* 5. 8. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9.

2. From wrath to love, *Ephes.* 2. 3, 4, 5. Compared with *Rom.* 5. 8. And again 1 *Thes.* 5. 9, 10. *For God hath not appointed us to Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

3. *From the Law of sin and death, to the Law of the spirit of life*, Rom. 8. 2.

4. *From the Curse of the Law, to the Blessing in* Abraham, *Gal.* 3. 13, 14.

5. *From Sin to Grace. He was made Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

6. *From grace to grace, in as much as all that believe in him, have received of his fulness and*

and grace for grace, 1 John 1. 6. Romans 1. 17.

7. From grace to glory, for Christ in you is the hope of glory, *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me into glory*, Psal. 73. 24. *He bringeth many Sons to glory*, Heb. 2. 10.

8. Christ is a way to God as to a Father. *We are all the Children of God by faith in Jesus Christ*, Gal. 3. 26. *I and the Children thou hast given me*, Heb. 10.

9. Christ is the way to God, as a Judge and Law-giver of a Law, satisfied for us, as a Law fulfilled in us by his Spirit.

10. *Christ Jesus is the way to God as a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6.

4. *Particular, What manner of way Christ is of man to God.*

1. He is a prepared way, a way prepared and contrived in the eternal Wisdom and Counsel of God. Read *Isa.* 62. 10, 11, 12. *A way sought out.*

2. He is a High-way, Read *Isa.* 35. 8. *Highly exalted by the Father, him hath God the Father exalted, and given him a name above every name. Highly exalted by Believers when he shall come to be admired in all them that*

that believe: and a way that highly exalts all that believe in him as the way.

3. Christ is a new way, for a new Creature to a new Jerusalem: It is a way that the new man only walks in. It is a new way and leads out of the Old Paths of the Old Nature; *a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us*, Heb. 10. 20.

4. Christ is a near way, all other ways are a-far off, but this way brings nigh those who were a-far off: *I bring near my Righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my Salvation shall not tarry*, Isaiah 46. last. *The Word is nigh thee in thy heart and in thy mouth*, Romans 10.

5. Christ is a safe way out of all harms way, there's no danger in this.

6. Christ is a plain way, an even way; a way so plain fools cannot erre in it; *Prov.* 15. 19. *The way of the Slothful is as a hedge of Thorns, but the way of the Righteous is made plain*; Read *Isaiah* 40. 4.

7. *Christ is a pleasant way, all Wisdoms ways are ways of pleasantness*, Pro. 3. 17. They are green Pastures, *Psal.* 23. *His way is a way full of delights, and his Commands are not grievous but pleasant; pleasures are at his right hand for ever more.*

8. *Christ is a peaceable quiet way, all Wisdoms Paths are paved with peace*, Prov. 3. 17.

There's no disturbance, strife, divisions in the way: Christ the unity of the Spirit, is kept in the bond of Peace. The way of this Prince of peace, is a way of peace, for the Son of Peace.

9. Christ is a way of light, full of light, in him is no darkness at all; *He's the true light that lighteth every Man coming into the World*, John 1. 9. He is given a Covenant of light to the gentiles and the glory of the people of Israel.

10. Christ is a only one way, if another way to God besides, it must be a false way: there's no other name given under Heaven, whereby man shall be saved. There's but one Lord Jesus Christ, one Mediator between God and Man, the man Christ Jesus, and all Ministrations was but as so many Paths leading from and too this one way: Jesus Christ the same to day, yesterday and for ever, both before the Law and Prophets, after the Law and Prophets. Before *John Baptist*, and in the Ministry of *John Baptist*, and Christ manifested in the Humanity, and after Christ in the Flesh, in the Ministry of Christ, in Spirit, in his Apostles, in the Primitive and Apostolical Ministration, and since that in the Apostacy of the Churches; still to this day Christ is the same one way.

11. Christ

11. Christ is an open Way, an open Door, an open Fountain, a free way for all Comers. He that cometh to me, I will in no wise shut out, or cast out, none are kept out of this way, but such as through unbelief shut themselves out; its the Kings High-way, none need doubt of it, or need fear to be found in it.

12. Christ is an endless way, a long way for a long life, a living growing way, the further any one goes, the further he has to go: Its Eternal Life to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ. And he is a Priest, not after a Carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

Application.

Be Exhorted to turn into this way, art wandring in the uncertain ways of thy own Imaginations, or of others Opinions, and art sensible of it, but knows not yet how to help it.

1. Exercise Faith in the sufficiency of Gods Grace to lost Sinners, Christ was and is a way sought out for lost Sinners.

2. Exercise Prayer, lift up the powers of thy Soul, and cry mightily to God with *David* on this wise, *Psal.* 143. 8. *Cause me to*

know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up thy Soul to thee.

3. Exercise holy Patience, wait to be directed into the way; that Gods Ministring Spirit may at length guide thee in, and that thou mayest hear the voice, saying behind thee, *This is the way, walk in it.*

2. *Art thou doubtful whether thou art in the way of Christ or no.*

Take these Directions.

1. Be Conversant, search in the Scriptures, for they testifie of Christ the way; the Scriptures are a hand pointing to Christ, in and under all Ministrations: *These things are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ*, John 20. 31. To him give all the Prophets Witness.

2. Thou shalt not miss of the right way, if thou leave *Mount Zina* on thy left hand, and go with thy Face turn'd thitherward, towards thy right hand; leave what ever genders to Bondaging thy Soul, all slavish fear, and come to perfect love.

3. Go right on with thy Eyes fixed Heavenward, upward, forward, and mind not the inticing vanities of the World;

if risen with Christ, set thy Affections on things above, and not on things below.

4. If thou art in this way Christ, that brings to God, thou wilt certainly know by the many Crosses as are in the way, in every corner and crook of this way Christ thoulit meet with a Cross, but they will be of exceeding use to thee; thou must be sure to Eye what crosseth thy carnal mind, and keep in it: if an Enemy to the Cross of Christ, thou wilt miss of the way. Read *Luke* 9. 23. 1 *Cor.* 1. 18. *Gal.* 6. 14.

5. In the way to Christ thou wilt meet with a Wilderness, as well as *Israel* of old; thou wilt be tried and proved as they were, but abide faithful to God, believing in his promise, and murmur not at the difficulties thou meetest with, & trust in the Lord, for he hath promised he will make a way in the Wilderness, and Springs in the Desart. Read *Isaiah* 43. 19. and *Hosea* 2. 14.

A Word of Conviction to three sorts of Sinners.

1. Such as are out of the way Christ, let them read their Doom; *Eph.* 2. 12. and 2 *Thes.* 1. & 9.

2. Such as are resolved not to walk in the way, so far as known; Read *Jer.* 6. 16.

3. Such

3. Such as chooſe to themſelves falſe ways, read *Iſaiah* 66. 3.

Chriſt the Chief Shepherd.

Micah 7. 14.

Feed thy People with thy Rod, the Flock of thine heritage, which dwell ſolitary in the Wood.

The Words yield theſe Four *Obſervations.*

1. That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the Chief Shepherd of Souls.

2. That all true Believers are his particular Flock, or the Flock of his own heritage.

3. That the Rod of his Word and Spirit is the Chief Inſtrument, wherewith this Chief Shepherd, both feeds and governs his Flock.

4. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath an eſpecial regard, and tender reſpect to the weak, helpleſs, and ſolitary, or comfortleſs of his Flock.

1. *Obſer-*

1. *Observation.*

1. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the Chief Shepherd of Souls, and Ruler and Feeder of them.

Proofs.

Isaiah 40. 10, 11. *Behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his Arm shall rule for them, he shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd*, &c.

Jer. 31. 10. *He that scattered* Israel, *will gather him, and keep him as a Shepherd.*

Ezek. 34. 23. *And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, my Servant* David *he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd.*

John 10. 11. *I am the good Shepherd, saith Christ, and I know my Sheep and give to them.*

1 Pet. 2. last verse, *Ye were as Sheep going astray, but now are ye returned to the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of your Soul*, Cap. 5. 4. *And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear.* Read also, *Rev.* 7. 17.

Reasons.

1. That thereby God might manifest and expres

expreſs the tender pity and compaſſions of God to man, conſidered as ſtrayed from him, and appointing his own Dear Son to be their Shepherd, to gather, lead, rule and feed them, *God ſo loved the World, he gave his only Son.*

2. This way was the fitteſt way in which God could appear to Man, and Man be brought near to God in this relation of a Shepherd: Therefore the only wiſe God cloathed himſelf in ſuch a Nature, as Man might not run further from him, but draw nearer to him; for we ſee there's ſuch a Sympathy between the Shepherd and the Sheep, as they will draw near to each other: So that the Lord Chriſt is the begetter and maintainer of that Relation, which through the Serpent man had loſt.

3. Chriſt only was made Shepherd, a Chief Shepherd, that Man might not be further deceived, and ſo further loſt in going to falſe Remedies, falſe Shepherds; for all beſides Jeſus Chriſt, are Thieves and Robbers, there's no other Name by which man ſhall be ſaved but by this Name, this ſame Chief Shepherd.

4. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is Chief Shepherd, becauſe he excels all other Shepherds in theſe Properties.

1. *More*

1. *More Careful*, 2. *More Skilful*, 3. *More Watchful*, 4. *More Painful than all other Shepherds whatsoever.*

1. Who more careful then Christ, whose business it is to call, gather, keep, cure, comfort, relieve, redeem, succour, defend, nourish, feed, and tender his Sheep.

2. Who more skilful to judge between Cattel and Cattel, to know his Sheep by Name, to discern and perceive the Natures, distempers, infirmities and weaknesses of his Sheep.

3. Who or what Shepherd is more watchful over his Sheep, he keeps his Sheep, his watchful Eye is over them continually. *The keeper of* Israel *never slumbers nor sleeps.*

4. Who more painful than Christ, the spouse found him so, his locks was fill'd with the dew of the Frost.

Who or what Shepherd ever underwent that Pains that Christ hath for his Sheep: Witness his bloody sweat in the Garden, his bloody Scourgings, his bloody Crown of Thorns, his bloody hands and feet nailed to the Cross, his bloody side pierced, sending forth Water and Blood: his Soul being heavy to the Death, and stricken, smitten, and esteemed forsaken of God; and all this

for

for his Sheep: *I laid down my life for my Sheep*, said he.

Let the consideration of Christ Jesus being the Chief Shepherd, teach us

1. To run to him at his Call, who came not to call the self righteous, but the sin weary Souls to Repentance.

2. To own our Shepherd, know his voice from Strangers, and follow him whither so ever he goes.

3. To beware of the Wolf the destroyer, who comes in the garb of a Shepherd, but is a Murtherer; Satan, Antichrist, false Teachers, half Worshippers.

4. To be contented and walk cheerfully and comfortably in all Conditions, *Psal.* 23. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*

5. Cast our selves upon this careful, skilful, faithful Shepherd, who himself was tempted, and in all things is able to succour them that are tempted.

2. *Observation.*

That all true Believers are the peculiar Flock of his own inheritance; Christ as the Soveraign Lord, Ruler and Shepherd, hath many Flocks, but the Believing Flock are

the

the Flock of his own heritage; the Flocks of Sheep upon a thousand hills are his, *Psal.* 50. *But the Flocks of* Zions *hill are his peculiar Flock, the Flock of his portion, his delight.*

Proofs.

John 10. *And other Sheep I have, which are not of this Fold, them also must I bring;* verse 16. *Ye believe not because ye are not my Sheep.*

Psal. 87. 2. *The Lord loveth the Gates of* Zion, *more then all the dwelling places of* Jacob.

Reasons.

1. Because Believers, the Lords People, are in most esteem, being more precious then other Flocks. The Righteous is more excellent then his Neighbour. They are more Precious, they are comparable to Diamonds, *Zec.* 9. 16. *The Lord their God shall save them in that day as the Flock of his People, for they shall be as the Stones of a Crown.*

2. Believers have a choise and precious esteem of their Shepherd.

Unto you that believe he is Precious.

3. Believers have a special right in his redemption, a Saviour of all men, but especially them that believe.

4. Believers are only in Union and Communion

union with Christ as their Shepherd, and therefore are called the Flocks of his Associates or Companions; they are in the very Fold of Christ.

5. Believers are already brought home, and there's more joy in Heaven for the one sheep brought home upon the Shoulders of Christ, then the ninety and nine Sheep that see no need of a Saviour or Shepherd.

6. Believers are the fruits of Christs sore Travels, Conflicts, bitter Death and Passion, his long Sufferings, and Patience, and Pains, and therefore are the peculiar of his Flock: He pull'd these out as brands in the fire of Gods Wrath, he pluckt them out of the Jaws and Paws of the Lion and Dragon; and therefore they are his longed for, his Joy and Crown.

7. Believers are given to Christ as his Charge, Portion and Inheritance; and therefore he saith all that the Father hath given me, have I lost none, and no man shall pluck them out of my hands.

This may put us on the Trial to search our hearts, and see whether we are of the principal Flock of Christ.

VII. Characters of Christs Sheep.

1. They know his voice, his call in Word and Spirit; they can discern his voice from

from the Voice of a Stranger; *John* 10. 4, 5 *verſ.* 14.

2. They are as ready to obey as to know, and no ſooner doth he call but they run, *Cant.* 1. 4. *Pſal.* 119. 32.

3. They follow him through thick and thin, through great Tribulations whitherſoever he goes, *John* 10. 27. and *Rev.*

4. There is a Sympathy betwixt the Shepherd and the Sheep, they partake of the Nature of Chriſt, meek as he is meek, ſpotleſs as he is ſpotleſs, without blemiſh, before him dumb, and opens not their Mouths, in all conditions without guile as he is, pure even as he is pure, and in all things partakers with him of his Divine Nature.

5. They are not aſhamed to bear the Mark of their Fathers Name openly in their Fore-heads in their godly Converſation, *Rev.* 14. 1. *And I looked, and behold a Lamb, ſtood on Mount* Zion, *and with him* 144000 *having his Fathers Name in their Fore-heads.*

6. They are at the Beck, Will, and Command of their Shepherd, if he bid them go on they go, if lie ſtill, they lie down, if fold they fold, and ſo are ſubject to his Will only, and are more his than their own.

7. They delight to company with their own, and can't indure to aſſociate with the Goats or Wolves, it's againſt their Nature,

they say, *Why should we be as those that turn aside from the Flock of thy Companions*, Cant. 1. 7.

3. *Observation.*

That the Rod of Christ, his Word and Spirit is the Instrument of this Shepherd, wherewith he Feeds and Rules his People.

The Lord Christ as chief Shepherd hath the Instrument of a skilful and wise Shepherd, his Word and Spirit.

Proofs.

Micah 5. 4. *And he shall stand and Feed* [or Rule] *in the strength of the Lord, in the Majesty of the Name of the Lord his God.* And therefore the Lord himself is prophesied of to be the Rod, signifying the Ruling Power of Christ in Spirit.

Isa. 11. *vers.* 1, 2, 3, 4. *And there shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow up out of the Root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, The Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, The Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledg and of the Fear of the Lord; and he shall not Judg after the sight of the Eyes, nor Reprove after the hearing of the Ears: but with Righteousness shall he Judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity, for the Meek of the Earth; and he shall*

smite

smite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips slay the Wicked.

The powerful Vertues, Effects, and Operations of this Rod of Christ, his Word and Spirit.

1. The Rod of this skilful Shepherd hath a Teaching Vertue in it where it comes, it teacheth no denial in Godliness; this *Anointing shall teach you all things*; 1 John 2.27. For it is a Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Knowledg: *This Rod and Reproof giveth Wisdom*, saith *Solomon*.

2. It is of a Feeding Vertue; it is in this Spirit that the Chief Shepherd stands and Feeds in the strength and glory of the Lord; the Spirit feedeth the Sheep and Lambs, and maketh them lie down in green Pastures; its Feeding is green and pleasant. O the Soul satisfying Food that is in the Spirit of Christ. Thy word is more to me than my appointed Food, thy Word is sweeter to me than the Honey or the Honey Comb. This Rod Feeds the Lambs with the Promises, Feeds with Comforts; its in this Spirit, the Rod of his Mouth, that satisfies the Soul with Fatness; its in this Mountain that a Feast of fat things is made.

3. It is of a Ruling vertue, *Psalm* 110. 2. *The Lord shall send the Rod out of* Zion.

rule, thou in the midst of thine Enemies. Where this Rod or Spirit is manifest, it rules both in and for his Flock; it rules in them as a Law of Righteousness, or a law going out of *Zion, and the word of the Lord from* Jerusalem; *Isa.* 2. 2. *Its a Rod ruling for them over their Enemies, or an Iron Rod*, Psal. 2. 2.

4. The spirit of Christ is of a comforting vertue, when all hopes of outward comforts fail, as Friends, Money, Health, Provision, this Rod will comfort; *Psalm* 23. *I will not fear any evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and Staff they comfort me.*

5. The Rod, or word and spirit of Christ is of a reducing vertue, it brings back strayed Souls to the Fold, it brings to a sense of its wandrings, and lets them see that they were as Sheep gone astray, but now returned to the Chief Shepherd; it brings back the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*; it brings back the prodigal; this Spirit convinceth of its sin, unbelief, and back-slidings.

6. The Rod of Christs Word and Spirit is of a transforming Vertue, there is a Divine Magick in it; where it is it works Wonders, it hath the Vertue that *Jacobs* Rods had; *Gen.* 30. Being laid in the Gutters or Troughs where the Flock drank, they conceived speckled and spotted Cattle and brown Sheep, according to the Covenant of *Jacob* and *Laban*;

ban; so Jacob had the stronger Cattle, and Laban the weaker. If the Lord Christ please to Convey his Spirit or Rod into any Ordinance of Prayer, Meditation, Preaching, into Scripture Promises, or Providences, where the poor Sheep comes to drink with a Thirst after Life and Spirit, and Spirits Teachings and Comforts; behold there's a Conception follows, and every one bears Twins, and there's a Conformity according to the Heart of Christ, a Conformity to him in all things to his Life, Death, Sufferings, and Christ comes to be formed in them.

7. Christs Rod, Word, or Spirit, is of a budding, blossoming, and growing Nature, by which he is known to be of the chosen of God, *Psal.* 132. 17. There have I caused the Horn of *David* to bud, *Numb.* 17. 8. The Rod of *Aaron* budded and blossom'd and brought forth Almonds. We shall not be a budding blossoming People, until this Spirit of Christ, this Rod be hid in the Ark of our hearts.

4. *Observation.*

That the Lord Jesus Christ as a tender, careful, and faithful Shepherd, hath a special regard to the solitary, and helpless, weak and wandering of his Flock.

Proof.

Isa. 40. 11. *He shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, and gently lead those that are with young, and carry the Lambs in his bosome.*

Christs solitary Flock may be reduced to these Heads.

1. His little Flock, his Remnant, little in regard of the few number, in comparison of the multitudes of Devouring Beasts of prey; little in their own Eyes and Esteem, and little in regard of that little Esteem they have in the World. Christ Feeds them with this Promise, *Luk.* 12. 32. *Fear not little Flock*, &c.

2. His poor Flock is his solitary Flock. Poor either as to their being rob'd, spoil'd, and fleeced by their Enemies, and false Shepherds, or poor in their Spirits; *Zec.* 11. 11. *The poor of the Flock that waited upon me, knew the word of the Lord.*

3. Christ will feed his slaughter'd Flock, he will bind up their Wounds, pour Oyl of his Grace into them, recover them and lay meat before them: *Zec.* 11. 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord my God, Feed the flock of the slaughter; whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord, for we are Rich, and their own Shepherds pity them not.*

4. His

4. His ſcattered, loſt, and wandering Flock, Chriſt will feed, and gather, and bring home by his Rod or Spirit; ſuch as are loſt, and wander in the Woods and Wilderneſs of their own Imaginations, and now are all at a loſs in themſelves, and are ſat down ſolitary, bewailing their Wandrings. The Lord out of his tender Care and Compaſſions will ſeek them out, gather them, and fold them.

Pſal. 68. 6. *God ſetteth the ſolitary in Families, and brings forth thoſe that are bound with Chains*; And again, Pſ. 107. 41. *Yet ſetteth the the poor on high from Affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.* ver. 4. *They wandered in the wilderneſs in a ſolitary way, they found no City to dwell in, and he led them forth by a right way, that they might go to a City of habitations.*

Christ his Call to Sinners.

Matth. 11. 28.

Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

1. Observation.

Christ hath ever been the Caller and Inviter of Man to God.

Proofs.

It was Christs spirit in *Noah* a Preacher of righteousness to the old world; 1 *Pet.* 3. 19, 20.

It was Christs righteous spirit in *Lot* that was vexed with the abominations of the Sodomites.

It was Christs spirit in *Abraham* interceded for them if there had been but ten righteous persons.

It was Christ in *Moses* who was a Prophet and Leader of the people, and a Proclaimer of peace and salvation.

And all the prophets did by the spirit signifie that he would in his own person come and

and be the Publisher of his own Gospel of Peace. Read Christs Call *Pro.* 1. and *cap.* 8. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *Isa.* 55. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And he came in his own person, and his Cry was still *Come unto me*, in the words of the Text, *Come unto me*; John 7. 37. *If any man thirst, let him come to me. Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.*

Now let the consideration of Christ being the Caller and Inviter of Man to God, move us to come at his Call; and that upon these Considerations:

1. All that come not at Christs Call, are left without excuse.

John 15. 22. *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever comes to me should not abide in darkness; and he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken shall judge him at the last day*; John 12. 46, 48. and Rom. 2. 16.

2. Consider it was only the free love of God to sinners, without any respect to any Nations or Persons, Gifts, or Indowments: *God so loved the world that he gave his Son.*

3. Consider he is the Heir, and invites you to a participation of his Heirship and Inheritance; *Rom.* 8. 17. *Heb.* 2. 10, 12. *As many as believe and receive his call, he gives*

power

power to become the sons of God; John 1. 12.

4. Consider all men living are enjoyned to hear and obey the voice of this Prophet on penalty of being cut off from his people *Acts* 3. 22, 23.

5. Consider this Caller is patient, he calls and calls again and again, and takes you not at your first, second, or third refusal. *He waits to be gracious and to shew mercy*, Isa. 30. 18. His head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night; *Cant.* 5. 2. *He stands at the door and knocks*, Rev. 3. 20. and notwithstanding many denials, still he saith *Come, come, Come unto me.*

2. Observation.

Christ and Christ only is the center of the souls life and everlasting rest.

Proof.

He is therefore called the Standard to which all poor souls may resort as a refuge from the prey of the terrible Devourer, Sin, Satan. This is propheſied of *Isa.* 49. 22. to 26.

He is also termed the High-way, to which he hath declared to the end of the world, for all that will have salvation, to come into; *Isa.* 10. 11. cap. 35.

He is the Object for the Eye of Faith to be

be fixed on. *Look unto me the ends of the earth, and be ye saved*; Isa. 45. 22. figured out by the Brazen Serpent.

He is termed the Goal or Mark of the Prize, to which all that run the Race of Grace, shall certainly obtain; *Phil.* 3. 14.

He is term'd the Carcass to which all the Spiritual Eagles resort.

He is call'd the Way, Truth, and Life; *John* 14. 6.

He is term'd the Door of the Sheepfold, into which whosoever enters, shall be saved; *Joh.* 10.

The Light, that whosoever believes in and receives and abides in, shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

The Fountain for all Sinners to be cleansed, an Open Fountain.

He is termed the Name, the Onely Name and Power, that whosoever trusts in shall be saved.

These and many more are the Terms by which Christ is expressed in Scripture as the Onely and Sole Object and Center of the Souls Life and Salvation.

There

There is an All-sufficiency of Living Vertue in Christ, consider'd as the Souls Center of Life, whereby to reduce and bring back strayed Souls to God:

1. He is mighty to save, yea he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him; the Lord hath cloath'd him with Majesty and Strength.

2. As able; so furnished with all Fulness of Divine Excellencies; it pleased the Lord that in him all fulness should dwell, even *the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*; Col. 2. 3. and cap. 1. 19. John 1. 19. A fulness of Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, Peace, Power, Love, Vertue, Grace, Glory, and whatever may be called Goodness.

3. As he is able to save, and hath all the Fulness of the God-head whereby to save, so he is as willing as able. *I come, I come*, saith he, to do thy will, to bring back lost Souls to thee; and whosoever cometh to me as to the Center of their Souls life and salvation, *I will in no wise cast out.*

4. Chtist doth not onely invite but he invests all Believers souls into those treasures of his fulness, and will give unto them all things that appertain to life and godliness, glory and vertue. Read 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. and

makes

makes them partakers of his Divine Nature; and of his Fulneſs, *even grace for grace*; John 1. 19.

The Conſideration of Chriſt being the only Center of Life, the Station to which all that will have Life, Peace, and Eternal Life, in whom is a ſufficiency of Living Vertue to unite and reſtore ont-gone Souls to God, may teach us theſe

Leſſons.

1. Fix the Eye of Faith on him, run to him at his Call, look not back to *Sodom*, keep right on, the righteous hold on their way, and grow ſtronger and ſtronger.

Yea, they that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength.

2. If thou do not yet feel the Living Vertue, beg of God to reveal his Son in thee, and exalt the Standard of his Grace in thy Soul, and ſpread his Banner of Love over thee.

3. So far as he is revealed to thee, and in thee, glorifie the Riches of his Grace; and as ye have received the Lord Jeſus, ſo walk in him.

4. Admire the free Goodneſs and Rich Grace of God, that hath open'd a way in the Deſart, and a high-way in thy Wilderneſs'd Soul, and Springs of Water out of the Rocks.

5. Im-

5. Improve those present Openings o Christ to thy Soul, by a sweet, humbl waiting upon him for further Touches of h Love.

6. Check not those first Calls and Invita tions of Love, quench not the Sparks Grace by wilful Sins and Rebellions.

7. If thou meanest to Center in him, an to come under his Standard, harbour no his Enemies, but cut them off by speedy Re pentance and Mortification, lest tho make him that hath still been thy Frien become thy Enemy, if his Wrath should b kindled but a little.

All ye that Labour and are heavy Laden.

3. Observation.

That although the Free Offers and Ten ders of Grace and Salvation by Christ, i to all without respect of persons, yet non do come to Christ as to accept of it, bu creature-working, wearied, and sin, and felt burthened Souls.

That the Free Offers and Tenders of Grac is to all, is signified:

1. The Gospel is to be Preached to all Nations, and among all Nations, and to every Creature; *Matth.* 28.19. *Mar.* 16.15.

2. Christ

2. Christ came in the flesh to put an end to the Limits of the Legal Ministration, and to break down the Wall of Partition between Jew and Gentile, and to abolish in his Death the Law of Commandements contained in Ordinances; and therefore *Peter* who was a Minister to the Circumcision only, when he had seen the Vision of clean and unclean Beasts, he concludes, *I perceive God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him*; Act. 10. 34.

3. Christ came to Save and to Call Sinners to Repentance, but the Scripture hath concluded all under Sin, and therefore the Call is to all.

4. The Voice of Christ, Gods Wisdom, is to them that are without, *Prov.* 1. 20. But all Mankind are without God and Christ, and are strangers to the Covenant and Promise, and therefore the Call of Christ is to all.

5. The Voice and Call of Christ is to the Sons of Men, *Prov.* 8. 4. that is to say of that Man *Adam*; and therefore his Call is to all.

6. Christs Voice and Call is to simple ones, yea, and such as love simplicity or folly, yea and to such as are Scorners, yea,

and

and to them that delight in their Scorning, yea and to Fools, and to the worst of Fools, such as hate Knowledg: Therefore his Call is to the worst of Men; *Prov.* 1. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Yet notwithstanding none come to partake of the Vertue and Spirital Benefits of Christ, but those as accept of the Call, and believe in it.

This is signified in the Parable of the Supper, where the Invitation was to all; but most refused and made excuse, and none came but the compelled ones, such as were the Halt, Blind, and Deaf, and such as out of a sense of their own impoteney and insufficiency, accepted of the Invitation; for as Christ saith, *Many are called but few are chosen*, Matth. 9. 13. *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

This is signified in the Peny given to him that wrought the last Hour; *Matth.* 20. 16.

It's also signified by the one lost Sheep brought home to the Fold, wherein was more joy than the Ninety nine.

Not many wise Men, not many mighty, not many noble are called; *But God hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise, and base things, and things that are not*; 1 Cor. 1. 26.

The

All ye that Labour.

The Creature working wearied Souls demonstrated.

1. All such as Work and Labour as Slaves under Satans power, yet not by their own will, but cry out with the *Israelites* for deliverance, *Exod.* 2. 23. and with St. *Paul*, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I see a Law in my Members rebelling against the Law of my Mind.* Such as these do come to Christ, and accept of his Call: For there's a difference between such as labour and toyl as Slaves against their wills, and such as serve Sin with full consent: *I delight in thy Law with the inward man*, says St. *Paul*, *so then with my mind I serve the Law of God, and with my Flesh the Law of Sin.*

2. All such as work for Life and not from Life, and yet are sensible of their own creaturely Actings, and are weary of them, and come to acknowledg it no be of the Lord that People lie down in sorrow after they have wrought in the very Fire, and have wearied themselves for their very Vanity.

Like as the *Jews*, obtained not what they sought, because they sought not of Faith, but by the Works of the Law: These are

Labourers that work till they are weary of their Works, and say to the work of their Hands, What have you profited us as they in the Light and Spirit of Christ come to see and be sensible of it, and mourn under it, and seek to get from under it they will come to accept of the Call of Christ.

And are heavy Laden.

Who are the Sin burden'd Souls.

1. Such as are burdened with Sin, and grown under the burden of Sins guilt and condemning Power, which indeed is a heavy burden; for a wounded Spirit who can bear, except Christ be at the one end of this weight and burden: 'Tis too heavy for the Creature to bear. If our hearts condemn us, God is greater.

This made *David* cry out under the weight of Sins condemning power, *My sins are gone over my head as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me*, Psal. 38. 4.

2. Such are Sin burthen'd Souls, as are Oppress'd with the burthen of Sins active Power, when they feel Sin lively active, powerful, this *Paul* groan'd under when he said, *O wretched Man who shall deliver me from the body of this death*; 'twas sin imbo-

died

died, as had a body and active power over him that he was burdened with.

3. Such are sin burden'd Souls as are very tender Conscienced, to whom the very appearance of evil is a burthen, and presseth them down, grieveth them; they cannot lay their hand upon the hole of the Asp, they cannot play with sin, nor that which tends to sin.

4. Such are sin-burden'd Souls that are tender of grieving the good Spirit of God; and therefore can't so easily bear sin or entertain its inticements, but with *Joseph* says, *How can I do this evil and sin against my God.* Gods honour is more in his Eye, and the grieving his good Spirit, than the pain and torment he's like to undergo for it.

5. Such are sin-burden'd Souls that grieve and mourn over the sins of the Times, and the sins of the Nation or People, or the sins of their Relations. *Lot's* Righteous Soul was vexed or grieved for the sins of *Sodom*, and so was *Abraham* and *Noah*, and *Moses* was passionately grieved and burden'd with the Peoples idolatry; insomuch as he brake the Tables of the Law for grief.

6. Such are sin-burden'd Souls, that in all their Afflictions they read their sins, and so conclude with *Job*, *Why should sorrow-*

but man complain, man suffereth for his sin and so where sin lies heavy, the Affliction lies light; and do acknowledg the Lord has not dealt with them according to their sins.

Now to such as are thus burdened with sin, they accept of Christs Call, and so come to rest.

Let the consideration of this Truth, That the Call of Christ becomes only effectual to creature working and sin burthened Souls, Teach us these Seven

Lessons.

1. Be as ready to come as Christ is to Call, considering he calls you for your chiefest good and from your greatest hurt, and thou needs not doubt but he calls thee. *For whosoever will, let him come*, saith Christ. And again, *If any man will come, I will in no wise cast him out.*

2. Come while he Calls, and that considering if you stand it out, Sin and Satan will get the more power, and you will the more be in bondage, and harder 'twill be to get from under the power of Darkness at last.

And also considering there's a time when Christ will cease Calling, because you come not at his Call; and that when you call he will not answer. Read that Soul astonish-

 in

ing place to this purpose: *Prov.* 1. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

3. Labour no more for, but against sin, and give all diligence to make your Call sure and effectual.

4. Come to a sense and feeling of your own weakness and insufficiency either to withstand sin or perform that which is good, and let that be a burthen to you.

5. Cry mightily to him that is Mighty to save and willing to come to your help against that which burdens you.

6. Be weary of your creature actings as in themselves, and say in your hearts, *What have they profited me? I count all things loss, desiring not to be found in my own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is of God by Faith in Jesus Christ.*

7. Groan under the burthen of sin, let it not seem so light to you, which proved so heavy a burthen to your Saviour, as made him sweat drops of Blood, and to say, *My soul is exceeding heavy, even to death*; and which also, if not repented of, may prove a heavy, easeless, and endless burthen to thee. Let the Iron Yoke of Sin be heavy, but the Golden Yoke of Christ easie.

Four Observations from the last Words.

And I will give you rest.

That Christ will give ease, rest and refreshing to all that come unto him from a sense they have of their creature working wearied and sin-burden'd Souls.

Which Truth shall be demonstrated by these Particulars.

1. Shewing the Nature of Christs Rest.
2. From what Christ is a Rest.
3. In what Christ will cause his to Rest.
4. And the Application.

1. *Particular, The Nature of Christs Rest in these Particulars:*

1. Christs Rest, or the Rest that Christ will give, is a quiet Rest, a sweet, still, quiet Repose, out of the noise of the many Waters, the many Thoughts, the many Cares and Cumbers. *I will lay me down in quiet stillness*; saith my Soul, *Return O my soul into thy rest.*

See how Christ is the Souls quiet Rest in these Prophesies: *Isa.* 32. 18. *Jer.* 30. 10.

2. Christs Rest is a safe Rest; none shall make them afraid. *I will lay me down in safety, taking my rest; for the Lord will sustain me*; Psal. 4. 8. Read more of the safety of his Rest; *Hos.* 2. 18.

3. Christs

3. Christs Rest is a satisfying Rest: here the poor Soul may lie down at Noon fully fed and satisfied, *Psal.* 23. 2. When the poor Creature has fed it self to the full in all Creature Contentments and Comforts, that it's even surfeited therewith, yet without Christ, it must say, I want still, this brings me not to Rest.

4. Christs Rest is a glorious Rest; *Isa.* 11. 12. *His Rest shall be glorious, exceeding all Earthly Glory.*

5. It's a lasting or rather everlasting Rest, outlasting all other Rests; the most lasting'st Rest hath an end, but this is everlasting; everlasting Peace and Joy shall be upon their heads.

2. From what Christ is a Rest.

1. From Creature Works or Rests. He that's come to Christ *is entered into his Rest, and ceased from his own Labours*; Heb. 4. 10. *Blessed are the dead which sleep or die in the Lord, henceforth says the Spirit, they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

2. From Bondage, Sorrow and Fear: From all thy Sorrow, from all thy Fear, and thy hard Bondage: *Isa.* 14. 3. *Rom.* 8. 15.

3. From all External Miseries, Weak-

nesses, Troubles, Griefs, Calamities, whatsoever, all is made up in Christ the Rest.

3. *In what Christ will give Rest.*

They shall Rest

1. In his Love.
2. In his Fathers Will.
3. In Gods Covenant and Promises.
4. In his Spirits Sealing.
5. In a full assurance of Faith.
6. In a Conscience sprinkled with his own Blood.
7. In his and the Fathers Allsufficiency.
8. In the Favour of God.
9. In Gods continu'd Providences.

When may a Soul be said rightly, spiritually, and effectually to Come to Christ.

1. Believing in him, *He that comes to me shall never hunger, and he that believes in me shall never thirst:* Read *John* 6. 35. and *Heb.* 11. 6.

2. In Receiving his Testimony.

3. In pressing forwards and forgetting things behind, *Phil.* 3. 10. going on to perfection.

4. In Self-denying and holy Resignation and bearing his Cross.

5. In Ardent Affection. *Lord whither should we go but to thee, thou hast the words of Eternal Life?*

6. In

6. In looking to him as the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

7. In hearing and being obedient to the Fathers Teachings: *John* 6. 44, 45. *He that heard and learned of the Father, cometh to me.*

Heart Keeping.

Proverbs 4. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all Diligence, for out of it are the issues of Life.

The Words are an Exhortation and a Reason or Argument inforcing it in the Exhortation; 1. The Person Exhorting, that is *Solomon* in the Person or Spirit of Christ, of which he was Type. 2. The Persons Exhorted is every particular thy Heart in particular. 3. The matter of the Exhortation is to keep, guard, watch, look, to the Heart. 4. The manner how with all diligence, or as the Original hath it, *With all thy Keepings*; that is, with all diligent care, circumspection, industry, pains, abilities, powers and improvements. In the

the Reason inforcing the Duty, we are to consider the Nature of the Heart. 1. It is the Center of Life. 2. It is a Spring or Source, whence proceeds or issueth forth a good Life or an evil; therefore it's requisite to look to the Heart and to its Principle. From the words there will follow these Two Natural Observations,

1. *That Heart keeping is and ought to be every Christians chiefest Care and Duty.*

2. *That inasmuch as the Hearts of the sons of Men in general are the Fountains, Sources or Springs, whence issueth forth a good or evil Life, it ought to be our chiefest care to know in what Principle our Hearts stands.*

1. Observation.

That Heart keeping is and ought to be every particular Mans chiefest Care and Duty.

Proofs.

Deut. 11. 16. *Take heed to your selves that your Hearts be not deceived.*

Prov. 23. 19. *Hear my Son, be wise, and guide thy Heart in the way.*

Heb. 3. 12. *Take heed of an evil heart;* ver. 13. *lest any of your hearts be harden'd.*

1 Tim. 5. 22. *Keep thy self pure.*

1 John 5. 22. *Babes keep your selves from Idols;* Jude 21. *Keep your selves in the Love of God.*

Reasons

Reasons.

1. Because although God the Heart-searcher, be the Heart-keeper, yet he will have Man know his Duty and Gods Soveraignty.

2. Because of the multitude of Lusts which make continual War against the Soul, and the Heart is the Seat of War; 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Keep or abstain from fleshly Lusts, which War against the Soul.*

3. Because Satan, the grand enemy of the Soul, is very vigilant and diligent to destroy the Soul, and his design is against the Heart in chief; 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Be ye vigilant, because your Adversary as a roaring Lion walks about seeking whom he may devour.*

4. Because the Heart it self is very treacherous and deceitful above all things, *Jer.* 17. 9. there's no trust to it without a good guard.

5. Because by this means sins strength will be abated and sins snares avoided. See *Prov.* 22. 5. *Thorns and Snares are in the way of the froward, but he that keepeth his heart shall be far from them.*

6. Because by this means our Graces will be strengthened: *Rev.* 3. 2. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die.*

7. Be-

7. Because by this means Religion will be perfected into Act, and not only a business to talk on; see *James* 1. 26, 27. *If any man among you seem to be Religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this Mans Religion is vain. Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Affliction, and to keep himself or his own heart unspotted*, &c.

8. Because if we keep the Heart, we keep all, and if that be lost, or deceived, or betrayed, we lose all; there's the Magazine of Treasures; there's the Life of all, there's the Jewel in that Rich Cabinet: so says the the Text, *Out of it are the issues of Life.*

Sixteen choice Directions how to keep the Heart.

1. Would'st keep thy Heart, then keep thy Heart wakeful: dull, heavy, sleepy, sottish Hearts soon fall into Temptations: so said Christ when he found them sleeping, *Mark* 14. 37. *Simon sleepest thou, could'st thou not watch one hour? watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into Temptation*; Cant. 5. 2. *I sleep, but my heart wakes: it is the voice of my beloved.* Wakeful Hearts are in a readiness to receive Christ, and the dull sleepy sottish

tiſh Souls, Temptations are ready to ſeize and ſurprize them: *Luk.* 21. 34. *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be over-charged with ſurfeitings, and drunkenneſs and cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares; for as a ſnare will it come upon all that dwell upon the Earth.*

2. Would you keep your Hearts, then keep your Heart in a frame of fore-ſightfulneſs and conſideration.

Ezek. 18. 28. *Becauſe he conſidered and turned from his Tranſgreſſions, he ſhall not die but live, ſaith the Lord.*

The Righteous are truly wiſe, fore-ſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf, but Fools paſs on and are puniſhed; *Hoſea* 7. 2. *And they conſidered not in their own hearts, that I remember their Wickedneſs, therefore their own doings have beſet them about:* Read *Iſa.* 44. 19, 20. and *Jer.* 8. 6.

3. Keep cloſe to the command of God, and that will keep thy heart, when ſin againſt known commands wounds the heart, yea kills it dead.

Prov. 19. 16. *He that keepeth the Commandment keepeth his own Soul, but he that deſpiſeth his ways ſhall die;* Chap. 8. laſt. *He that ſinneth againſt me, wrongs his own Soul.* And on the contrary ſaith Wiſdom, *Prov.* 2. 11, 12. *When Wiſdom enters into thy heart, and*

and Knowledg is pleasant to thy Soul, Discretion shall preserve thee, Understanding shall keep thee.

4. Keep thy Heart down, keep it low, humble: when the Heart is lifted up it's subject to be overcome with many Temptations.

1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *I kept under my body*, said *Paul*, *and brought it in subjection, lest while I preach'd to others, my self should be a cast-away*: And his Advice was in choice of a Preacher, they should not choose a Novice or one that was proud, *Lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*: 1 Tim. 3. 6.

5. Wouldst keep thy Heart, then suffer it not to wander after thine Eyes; *Job* 31. 7. *If my steps have turned out of the way, and my heart walked after mine Eyes, then let me sow, and let another reap*: vers. 1. *I made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then should I look on a Maid.*

Prov. 6. 25. *Lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her Eyes.*

6. Keep thy Heart single, *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways*; Jam. 1. 8. Unfaithful, Treacherous both to God, to the World, and to his own Heart.

7. Wouldst keep thy Heart, then keep thy Heart stay'd on the Lord, and he will

keep

keep thee as nothing shall hurt thee or break thy peace.

Isa. 26. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on thee.*

8. Keep thy heart open for Christ thy Redeemer, Helper, thy King of Glory, thy Captain General, *The King of Glory, the Lord of Hosts, mighty in Battles*; Psal. 24. that he may come in to succour and relieve thee, and destroy all thy Souls Enemies.

9. Destroy not thy Heart by Bribes, *Gifts destroy the heart*; Eccles. 7. 7. Suffer not thy Heart to be stole away with Riches. Worldly things when they increase set not thy Heart upon them.

This *Delilah* the World, if not looked to and avoided, will certainly find out thy strength, and bind thee, and deliver thee up to the *Philistines*.

10. Commit the keeping of thy Heart to God, as unto a *faithful Creator and Preserver*; 1 Pet. 4. 19. Resign thy Heart to God, lose thy Heart in God; a Man will commit the keeping of Assurances to his most faithful Friend, and the keeping of his Jewels to his most choice Friend; thou canst not have a faithfuller Friend than God. *I am perswaded*, says *Paul*, *that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him*; 2 Tim. 1. 2.

11. Beg

11. Beg of God thy Heart may be kept. You have a promise for it, *Psal.* 22. *Their Hearts shall live that seek the Lord.*

12. Wouldst keep thy Heart, then ponder the faithful sayings of God and Christ in thy Heart.

Furnish thy Heart richly with the Word of God, let it dwell richtly in thee; *Col.* 1. 16. 'tis the best preservative against sin. *Psal.* 119. *I have hid thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

13. *Commune with your own hearts*, Psal. 4. and call them to Account as to their frame and dispositedness or indispositedness to God and Eternity, *Psal.* 16. 7. *My Reins shall instruct me in the Night season*, said *David.*

14. Would you keep your Hearts, then keep out Cumbers or plunging into much worldly business: 'Twas *Martha* that was cumbred with many things, but *Mary* who kept her Heart out of it and sate her down at the Feet of Christ, *That chose the better part.*

15. Carefully observe its declinings, and quickly recall it from them; *Psal.* 119. 59, 60. *I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies. I made haste and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.*

16. Maintain holy Communion with God, and take heed of losing the sweet im-

injoy thereof, leſt your Hearts be looſed off from God.

Jude 21. *Keep your ſelves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

2. Obſervation.

That the Heart is the Fountain, Spring, or Source, whence iſſues out either a good Life or an evil, and therefore it ought to be our chiefeſt care to ſearch in what principle our hearts are, and do act.

Proofs.

Luk. 6. 44. *Every Tree is known by its own Fruit, for of Thorns Men do not gather Figs, nor of a Bramble Buſh Grapes*; verſ. 45. *A good man out of the good Treaſury of his heart brings forth good, and an evil Man out of the evil Treaſury of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil.*

Deut. 29. 18. *Leſt there be a Man or Woman, Tribe or Family, whoſe heart departeth from the Lord, leſt there ſhould be a Root among you that beareth Gall or Wormwood*; Heb. 12. *Leſt any Root of bitterneſs ſpring up among you, trouble you, and many be defiled.*

Matth. 15. 19. *For out of the heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murthers, Adulteries*, &c.

James 3. 11, 12. *Doth a Fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?*

The Heart is either naturally or habitually corrupt, and so is a Spring of Evil.

1. Naturally corrupt, *Gen.* 6. 5. *Every Imagination of the hearts of the Sons of Men is only evil.*

Job. 11. 12. *Vain Man would be wise, though he be born as a wild Ass's Colt.*

Habitually, Corrupt when gained a habit or custom of evil; *Jer.* 13. 22.

Hosea 9. 9. *They have deeply corrupted themselves.* Eccles. 7. last; and that by

Evil Example.

Bad Education.

Heedless Walking.

The necessity of Heart searching: Motives for it.

1. It's the first Act of Repentence; *Lam.* 3. 40. *Let's search and try our ways, and turn to the Lord*: No turning to God without it.

2. It approves us to God, and it's that by which we are approved of God not to be Reprobates.

Gal. 6. 4. *Let every Man prove his work, and then shall he have rejoycing in himself alone.*

2 Cor. 13. 5, 6. *Examine your selves, prove*

your

ur own selves: know ye not your own selves, w that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be Re-robates; but I trust ye shall know we are not eprobates.

3. It fits us for Duty.

1 Cor. 11. *But let a man examine himself, let him eat.*

1 Kings 8. 38. *Every one that knows the lague of his heart, and shall spread forth his nds in this place, then hear thou in Heaven.*

4. It causeth our Duties to be accepted, nd the weaknesses of them pardoned; Chro. 30. 19. *The good Lord pardon every ne that prepareth his heart to seek the Lord God of his Fathers, tho he be not cleansed ac-ording to the cleansing of the Sanctuary.*

5. Searching prevents mis-judging or ash judging of others; *Luk.* 6. 42.

6. It's a Note of the soundness of thy Heart, when thou art willing to be searched.

7. It is a sure Remedy against Temptations, it will keep out many hurtful Lusts.

Helps or Directions in Heart searching.

1. Enter into an Inquisition in thy own Heart, by daily and frequent calling thy Heart to account.

2. Company with discerning Christians, they'll help thee in thy Heart searching.

3. Receive gladly Christian Reproof *Psal.* 141. 5. *Let the Righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness to me:* Observe *David's* frame of heart when reproved by the Prophet *Nathan*, though he was a King.

4. Affect greatly a Heart searching Ministry; its a note of an unsound Heart that cannot endure it.

Isa. 30. 10. *This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the word of the Lord; which say to the Seers see not, and to the Prophets prophesie not right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesie unto us deceits.*

5. Look into the perfect Law of Liberty of Righteousness, and abide therein, comparing thy Actions with it, and see how far thou comes short of it, and by no means compare not thy self with thy self; 2 Cor. 10. 12. but take the Candle of the Lord with thee in thy search.

6. And Lastly, Together with the use of all means, seek to the Lord the Heart searcher, beg him to open thy heart to thee, and discover the deceits of it; *Psal.* 139. last.

Characters of a right heart, or a heart rightly principled, whose root, fountain, and rise, and original is from God, and thence sends forth a good life.

1. A right principl'd heart is a good eyeing heart, *Psal.*

Psal. 25. 15. *Mine eyes are ever towards thee*; and again,

I have set the Lord always before me, and they as do not fall into a depth of wickedness. Read *Psal.* 64. 5, 6.

2. A through resolved and purposed Heart. Josh. 24. *I and my house we will serve*: *Dan.* 1. 8. He purposed in his Heart he would not defile himself with the portion of the Kings meat.

Acts 11. 23. He Exhorted them, *That with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.*

3. A firm and self-denying heart; *Tit.* 2. 11. *The Grace of God that hath appeared unto us, teaching us that denying ungodly Lusts,* &c.

4. An inflamed heart is a right principl'd, when its inflam'd with a holy Zeal to God and for his Truth: *Psal.* 39. 3. *My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned.*

Luk. 24. 32. *Did not our hearts burn within us while he reason'd out of the Scripture to us.*

5. An inlarged Heart, inlarged Desires, inlarged Affections, inlarged in Spiritual Duties.

Psal. 119. 3. *I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt inlarge my heart.*

This

This is a New Covenant Promise, prophe
sied of, Isa. 60. 5. and 65. 23.

6. A Pondering Heart; *Luk.* 2. 9. *Ma*
13. 5. *Every one instructed in the Kingdom*
Heaven, is like unto a Householder, which brin
out of his Treasury things new and old.

7. A Heart bigger in Affection than Act
on, greater in Desires than Abilities, great
er in substance than in shew, greater
possession of Truth than in profession ther
of.

8. A Heart acting in its own Sphere a
Center, and not in anothers. He drin
Water out of his own Cistern; *Prov.* 5. 1
16, 17. and 9. last, *He hath in his belly*
spring of Living Water, springing up to Et
nal Life.

The Excellency of a Gracious Tongue or Speech.

Prov. 10. 20.

The Tongue of the just is as choise si
ver. But the Heart of the wicked
is little worth.

Amongst those many precious Pearls
treasured up in Wisdoms Proverbial Cab
binet

binet, here is one of no ſmall Worth and Excellency: Gracious Speech, the Tongue being the Organ of Speech, for there could be no Speech without the Tongue.

The Lord hath given me the Tongue of the Learned, or Speech of the Learned. The Words by way of a Parable or Proverb, ſheweth,

1. *The Excellency of a good Speech or Tongue.*
2. *The Non-Excellency of a bad Heart.*

1. The Excellency of a good Tongue or Speech, and that, 1. From the Excellent quality of the Speaker; under this term or title of juſt, *viz.* upright, perfect, good, or gracious. 2. From the likeneſs or comparity it hath with that, which in its Nature is Excellent, that is Choice Silver, or Pure Silver.

2. The Non-Excellency of a bad heart, expreſſed by this quality, wicked or bad, evil, ungodly, and by this term or notion its little worth; ſo that there will ariſe from the Words theſe two Obſervations.

1. Obſervation.

That ſound and gracious Speech is a very great Excellency, and is a grace and glory to a gracious heart.

2. Obſervation.

That a wicked or a graceleſs heart is a worthleſs heart.

1. *Observation.*

Thus a gracious Tongue or Speech is a very great Excellency, and is a great grace and glory to a gracious heart.

In which Truth I shall first prove it by Scripture, 2. Confirm it by six Scripture Arguments. 3. By six Comparisons demonstrate its super-excellency above Choice Silver, 4. Apply it by Lessons which the said Truth may teach us.

Proofs.

Prov. 3. 22. *Wisdom is said to be a grace to the Neck.* And so sound and gracious Speech is grace to the lips of the gracious. For what's spoke of Wisdom, the same is applied to Speech, which is but the Tongue of Wisdom. The gracious Words, Speeches, and Instructions of a wise and gracious Heart, *shall be as a Crown, an Ornament of grace unto thy head, and Chains about thy neck*, Cap. 1. 9.

Arguments.

1. Gracious Speech makes a Gracious Heart, truly Honourable, Noble, and Royal: *Prov.* 22. 11. *He that loves pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the King shall be his Friend.* A gracious Heart for the grace or graciousness of his lips, the King of Heaven and Earth shall be his Friend. A gracious Heart is very great and gracious with God.

2. Gra-

2. Gracious Speech makes us like our gracious Lord and Saviour Christ: *For grace is poured into his lips*, Psal. 45. 2. So grace is poured into the lips of gracious hearts, the more grace is in our lips, the more like Christ, whose words were words of grace and truth.

3. Gracious Speech is the Language of Heaven, and of the Heaven born Christian, and by it they declare of what Countrey they are, *Heb.* 11. 14. *For they that speak such things, declare plainly that they seek a Countrey*, *verſ.* 16. *For they desire a better Countrey, a Heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God*: For they that are of the Heavenly Countrey have the Heavenly Tongue, or Language, even the Language of *Canaan*, as twas told *Peter surely thou art one of them, thy Speech bewrayeth thee.*

4. Gracious Speeches have a kind of Grace and Majesty in them; as in our Lord Christ, *they wondred at the gracious Words that proceeded out of his mouth*, Luk. 4. 22. Gracious Words carry a kind of Majesty and Glory with them; *Mat.* 7. 28, 29. *They were astonished at his Doctrine, for he taught them with Authority, and not as the Scribes*: *How forceible are right words*, Job. 6. 25.

5. A gracious Tongue or Speech, is a

grece

grace to a gracious man, is whole man: As,

1. To his Person.
2. To his Affections.
3. To his Actions.
4. To his Profession.

1. To his Person, gracious, sound, savory, prudent speech, graceth a mans person, behaviour and gestures, and makes him lovely and amiable.

2. It graceth a mans Affections and Passions, his Love, Anger, Joy, Sorrow, Fear, Zeal, Delight, and Desires, are all graced and beautified.

The meek will he beautifie with Salvation. How did that gracious Speech or Word of *Paul*, adorn his Affection of Delight, when he said, *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.* How was *Davids* Affection graced when he saith, *Psal.* 111. *Oh! how I love thy Law* and his Passion of hatred, when he saith, *I hate every false way.*

3. A Christians Actions are graced much by gracious words, all works of Holiness are much adorned by gracious Speech, or let the Words of my mouth, and the Meditations of my heart be acceptable to thee, my Strength and my Redeemer. All Duties of Holiness and Piety, if acted from a principle of grace, Oh! what a grace it puts

puts upon them, whether Prayer, Preaching, Singing, Holy Conference, or any other holy Action; as to instance in Singing, *Col.* 3. 16. *Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

4. A Christians Profession, or Conversation, is much graced and beautified by gracious Speech; *Col.* 4. 5, 6. *Walk in Wisdom towards them that are without: let your Speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer every man.* Eph. 4. 29. *Let no corrupt Communication come out of your mouths, but that which is good to the use of Edifying, that it may Minister grace to the hearers.*

6 *Argument*, Gracious Speech is a grace and glory to a gracious heart, because gracious Speech is the very product or effects of a gracious heart. A gracious tongue, and a gracious heart are ever Relatives, where's one, there's t'other. A naughty heart may give forth good words, but not gracious; but a gracious heart can't but give forth gracious Speech. Out of the abundance either of good or evil, that's in the heart the mouth speaketh.

The

The Super-Excellency of a gracious Tongue or Speech above Choise Silver demonstrated by Six Comparisons. The Text saith, *It's a Choise Silver, but the very Truth, tis more Choice and Excellent than the Choicest Silver.*

1. Choise Silver is fined and re-fined by the Elementary fire, but a gracious Tongue or Speech by the fire of the Spirit. *Acts* 2 3. *And there appeared unto them cloven Tongues as of fire*: Not a word that is spake that's truly gracious, or proceeding from a principle of grace, but hath bin well tried and refined by the Spirit of sound Wisdom; and what *Paul* saith of a mans Works, *that every mans Works shall be tryed by fire*, so shall mans Words; *for by thy Words thou art justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be Condemned*, Matt. 12. 36, 37.

2. Choice Silver, though ever so fine, may have some dross, but gracious words proceeding from Grace, are pure, even as their root, fountain or spring is pure; for there's not a word that drops from the mouth of a gracious Heart, but the Lord owns it as his own words. For can one *Fountain send forth sweet water and bitter*; Jam. 3. 11, 12.

3. The most choice Silver is but white Earth digged out of the Earth by Mans labour,

bour, but gracious Speech is heavenly, come down from Heaven, *John* 3. 31. *He that is of the Earth is Earthy, and speaketh of the Earth; he that cometh from Heaven is above all. Every good and perfect gift, whether Preaching, Prophecy, Prayer, Conference, comes down from above, from the Father of Lights*; See *Jam.* 1. 17.

4. The most choicest Silver, as most purely refined, is but a perishing Element; Time wears it out, Rust eats it, Fire consumes it, and Water wastes it. *Your Gold and your Silver is Cankered, and the rust of it shall be a witness against you*: Jam. 5. 3.

But gracious Speech hath a never fading Nature, *Heaven or Earth may pass away, but not one jot or tittle of my word shall*. Grace out-lives all worldly Riches, time eats out the most pure, rich, choice Silver and Gold, and all Elementary Mettals; therefore Wisdom, the root of a gracious Tongue or Speech, is called durable Riches.

5. Choice Silver is a choice Thing, and with it we accomplish many choice things. Eccles. 7. 12. *Money is a defence*; and again, *Prov.* 10. 15. *The Rich Mans Goods are his strong City*; but the Tongue of a gracious Heart gets him a better defence; and whilest graceless Men seek to defend themselves, and offend others by their

Gold

Gold and Silver, and account it their strong City, the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, and the Righteous run unto it and are safe.

6. Silver is a choice thing; and the Wise Man said, *Answereth all things*; Prov. 10. 19. but a gracious Tongue doth more: A gracious Heart shall do more with one gracious Word than all the World can do with all their Gold and Silver.

The Lips of the Righteous teach many, convert many, prevail with God for many; the effectual Prayer of the Righteous availeth much. *Hezekiah*, *Jehoshaphat*, *David*, and other gracious Kings could not have preserved themselves by their Armies, Purses, and Treasures, as they did by their Prayers and holy Exercises of their Tongues. *Peter* could not have given so good and beneficial an Alms to the poor Cripple if he had given him good store of Silver and Gold, as he did by that gracious speech or word, *Arise stand up and walk.*

Application.

This Truth may teach us these 6 or 7 Lessons.

1. Highly prize and press after a gracious Tongue, gracious heavenly Speech; and with all thy gettings get a good Tongue, it will make thee highly esteemed of God and

all

all his Saints, it will be a Crown of Grace here, and of glory hereafter.

2. It may Teach us to try our Words, the Ear, saith the Wise Man, trieth words, as the Mouth tasteth Honey. Let us bring our Words to the Touch-stone of Grace, if not gracious, holy, harmless, righteous, let them die, bring them not forth. If pure innocent, good, just, words of Truth, sobriety, sound words, then let them go forth and prosper.

3. Set a Watch before thy Lips, and take heed thou offend not with thy Tongue. Watch what offers it self to come forth, that it be seemly, godly, and gracious.

4. Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be hasty to utter things either before God and Man: *be more ready to hear than to offer the Sacrifice of Fools:* Eccles. 5. 1.

Jam. —— *be swift to hear, slow to speak.* Many are the miscarriages occasion'd by a rash Tongue, by which God is much dishonoured, and our own selves damnified, and others injured.

5. Put away all unsound, unsavory, unwholesom, unseemly Words and Speeches, Eph. 4. 29, 31. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister*

ster grace unto the hearers. Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, Chap. 5. 4. *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*

6. Beware of the Leaven of Hypocrisie, and the dross of Dissimulation, deceitful words.

Eph. 4. 25. *Put away lying, and speak the truth every one to his Neighbour.*

Accuse not thy Brother falsly, take up no complaint against thy Brother hastily.

7. Bear up against the loud and lewd Words of the ungodly, who endeavour to outspeak the Voice of God in thee, and bring thee into contempt by Reproaches, and Persecutions: for though their graceless words may be louder than thy gracious words, God will sooner hear thine than theirs.

Eccles. 9. 17. *The words of the Wise are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among Fools.*

But the heart of the Wicked is little worth.

2 Observation.

That a graceless Heart is a worthless Heart.

The Heart is either the worst or best piece in Man: if a gracious Heart, it is of excellent worth and excellency: if graceless,

leſs, 'tis worth nothing. The heart of man is his inſide, the root, the Core; if that be naught, unſound, rotten, all is naught within, he can't be good without.

Man in his beſt Eſtate is altogether Vanity, Pſal. 39. 5.

Then ſure in his worſt eſtate, his prophane, vile, ſinful, wicked eſtate, muſt needs be vain; *Pſal.* 62. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie*, to be laid in a ballance, they are altogether vanity, *Pſal.* 94. 11. *The Lord knows the thoughts of the wiſe to be but Vanity.*

The Worthleſsneſs of a Graceleſs Heart.

Scripture Arguments, Proving, Confirming this Truth, That a graceleſs heart is a worthleſs heart.

1. A graceleſs heart is a very uſeleſs heart, and ſo a worthleſs heart, an unprofitable heart, an unſerviceable heart either to God or Man. The unprofitableneſs and uſeleſsneſs of the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, was by the Prophet ſet forth under the Similitude of a Uſeleſs Vine.

Ezek. 15. 2, 3. *What is the Vine Tree more then any Tree, or then a Branch among the Trees of the Forreſt, ſhall Wood be taken thereof to do any work, or will a man take a Pin*

thereof to hang any Veſſel? Even ſo a graceleſs heart is uſeleſs, unprofitable, unſerviceable, for building, for ſtrengthening, for bearing; wholly unprofitable either to God, to Man, or themſelves: therefore Chriſt in his Parables ſets out the uſeleſsneſs and worthleſsneſs of graceleſs hearts by the Similitude of unprofitable Servants.

2. A graceleſs heart is a worthleſs heart, in regard 'tis a fruitleſs heart, it anſwers not the end of its Creation, namely to glorifie God by good Fruits; *Herein is my Father Glorified that ye bring forth Fruits.* And ſaith Chriſt, *Bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance.* Then is a heart Fruitleſs, when as it brings forth no Fruit, according to Chriſts Parable of the Fig-tree; *Luke* 13.7. Or elſe that fruit it brings forth, is to it ſelf, and its own ſelf ends; *Hoſea* 10.1. Ephraim *is an empty Vine, and bringeth forth Fruit to himſelf.*

3. A graceleſs heart is a weak heart, and ſo a worthleſs heart, *Ezek.* 16. 30. *How weak is thine heart ſaith the Lord God, ſeeing thou do'ſt all theſe things, the works of an Impudent Whoriſh Woman.* Sin weakens the heart. If the houſe of *Saul*, Sin grows ſtronger, the houſe of *David*, Grace grows weaker.

1. Sin weakens the Affections, ſucks out the heart, life and ſtrength of the Affections, love, joy, delight, deſire, zeal. 2. Sin

2. Sin weakens the Conſcience, its weak in its Evidences, to and for God and his Truth. Shipwrack is made of a good Conſcience, no good Evidence for Heaven and Eternal Life, and Peace with God, while Sin bears rule.

3. Sin weakens mens graces, and makes them as weak as other men, in their faith, hope, comforts, love of God, fear of God, humility, meekneſs, righeouſneſs, goodneſs, and leaves them without life of grace; they may have a name, they live but are dead.

4. Sin weakens mens gifts, parts, and indowments, their Wiſdom, Prudence, Learning, and deprives them of the true uſe and benefit of them, converting them againſt God and his ſimple Truth, and his people: hence 'tis the greateſt gifted men, for memory, learning, and excellent humane gifts and parts, prove the greateſt Adverſaries to Truth, and perſecutors of his people.

5. Sin weakens mens Duties and Services, Ordinances and Performances, and leaves them liveleſs, heartleſs, ſpiritleſs.

6. Sin weakens mens judgment and underſtanding, and perverts and corrupts them, ſo as they are not able to give a true ſolid Judgment upon any one Truth of God. And thus a graceleſs heart is a weak and ſo a worthleſs heart.

4. Graceleſs hearts are deceitful and treacherous hearts, and ſo worthleſs hearts, no truſting them, *Jer.* 17. 10. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked.* A deceitful falſe hearted man is of no eſteem, no account, of no value; there's no more truſt to be given to him, then to a Briar or a Thorn Hedge. Read *Micah* 7. 6, 7.

5. Graceleſs hearts are double and divided hearts, and ſo worthleſs hearts. There's no finding a graceleſs heart, ſo double, divided, ſometimes here, and ſometimes there; as the Proverb is, he plays faſt and looſe; ſometimes for and ſometimes againſt Truth, ſometimes for God, and again for his Luſts and the World.

Hoſea 10. 2. *Their heart is divided, now ſhall they be found faulty, ſaith the Lord.*

Where ever he is, and in whatever he acts, he is found faulty and naught, good for nothing.

James — *The double minded man is unſtable in all his ways.*

6. A Graceleſs heart is a groundleſs heart, and ſo a worthleſs heart, *Pſal.* 64. 6. *The heart of the Wicked is deep, groundleſs.* Truth can have no footing, no ground in a graceleſs heart; the Word doth not abide and dwell richly in a graceleſs heart. A graceleſs heart can't keep ſound words, ſound

Know-

Knowledge, it retains not God in their minds.

7. A graceleſs heart is an unſound heart, and ſo a worthleſs heart; there's no ſoundneſs in it: a corrupt heart, and of a corrupting nature. A man ſhould ſhun a graceleſs heart as he would an infected houſe or perſon.

8. A graceleſs heart is an unſavory heart, and ſo worthleſs and good for nothing, but to be caſt out and trodden under foot, as unſavory Salt, good for nothing. *The Carnal minded man ſavours not the things of the Spirit*, Rom. 8. *Chriſt bid* Peter *get him behind him, Satan, for thou ſavoureſt not the things of God.*

9. A graceleſs heart is a haughty heart, and ſo a naughty heart. A proud and lofty heart is rejected of God as good for naught. He reſiſteth the Proud, *The haughtineſs of man ſhall be laid low*, Iſa. 2.

Application.

Let the Conſideration of this, That a graceleſs heart is a worthleſs heart, teath us,

Leſſons.

1. To look to our hearts, ſearch in our hearts, ſee in what Principle they ſtand whether in a principle of ſin or grace, i

of Sin, then Graceleſs, and ſo Worthleſs; as *Solomon* ſaid of the Tongue, the ſame may be ſaid of the Heart, *Life and Death are in the Power of the Tongue.* So there's either life or death, good or evil in thy heart.

2. Cleanſe your hearts that they may be clear in the Spring. *Purifie your hearts, ye double minded.* Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit.

3. Let us Endeavour to have our hearts eſtabliſhed with grace, that ſo they may be grounded in a principle of Righteouſneſs, that Sin, World, Fleſh, Devil, Luſts, Temptations, Deceits, do not ſhake it from its hope, nor weaken its ſpiritual ſtrength.

4. Give God thy heart, for him to frame and mould up to his Service, and cry to him that he would create in thee a clean, ſound, pure heart, *and renew in thee a right Spirit*; Pſal. 51.

5. Above all keepings, keep thy heart, watch it, guard it night and day, for if that be defiled and made good for naught, then all's gone.

6. Are graceleſs hearts naughty and worthleſs hearts? O then have naught to do with ſuch as are ſo no more then honeſt and neceſſary Occaſions calls for. One graceleſs heart will ſoon corrupt another.

Can

Can a man touch Pitch and not be defiled, or carry Fire in his bosome and not be burnt, said the wise man.

No more can a man have continual Converse with prophane persons, graceless hearts, and not be made graceless himself.

Besides it much bewrayes the bad frame of thy heart at present: For if the heart be right with God, it cannot admit of profaneness, nor that which in the least tends to it; but it abstains from all appearance of evil. Merry hearts are known or discovered by the Company they keep, *&c.*

Self Pleasers, no God Pleasers.

Rom. 15. 2.

Let every one of us Please his Neighbour for his good to Edification.

The words are an exhortation, grounded upon the Second Table of the Law, *viz.* our Duty to our Neighbour, *Chap. 13. vers. 9. If there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy Neigbour as thy self:*

ſelf, Mat. 32. 40. Mar. 12. 31. Gal. 5. 14 In which Words here is,

1. The Subject matter contained, and that's an Exhortation to Neighbourly Affection, expreſſed by Neigbour Pleaſing.

2. The perſons exhorted, in general the Church of the Romans, in particular every one bearing the name of a Chriſtian. *Let every one of us.*

3. Perſons to be loved, every ones Neighbour, Relations, either more near or farther off.

4. The manner how this duty of Neighbour pleaſing ſhould be performed: 1. In minding their good, and 2dly eſpecially and primarily their Soul edifying good.

The words hold forth theſe four Precious Truths, worthy of Note in this caſe of men pleaſing.

1. Obſervation.

That Self-Pleaſers are not God-Pleaſers; or thus, Such as are Self-Pleaſers, or Pleaſers of themſelves, are not ſuch as pleaſe God.

2. Obſervation.

That thoſe are meet to be Men-Pleaſers, who Pleaſe God.

3. Ob-

3. Obſervation.

To be Men-Pleaſers or Neighbour Pleaſers, is not good, unleſs we do pleaſe them for their good.

4. Obſervation.

Then Pleaſe we Men or our Neighbours for their good, when in our ſeeking to pleaſe them, we mind and endeavour their Soul edifying and Soul ſaving good.

1. Obſervation.

Self Pleaſers are not God Pleaſers.

To be Pleaſers of our ſelf doth in no wiſe pleaſe God, Self Servers, Self Seekers, Self Pleaſers, cannot be God Servers, God Seekers, God Pleaſers.

The Truth of this Poſition or Obſervation confirmed by theſe Scripture Arguments or Reaſons.

1. Self-pleaſers are not God-pleaſers, becauſe there's no greater Enemy to God then ſelf, and ſo no worſe Enemies to God then Self-pleaſers.

The Friend-ſhip of the World is Enmity to God.

No

No Man can ſerve two Maſters, either he muſt love the one and hate the other, or hate the one and love the other; no Man can ſerve and pleaſe God and Mammon.

2. Becauſe Self-pleaſers are Self-will'd, oppoſers and perſecutors of ſuch as pleaſe God, and therefore can't pleaſe, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 15. *Who both killed the Lord Jeſus and their own Prophets, and have perſecuted us, and they pleaſe not God*: God can't be pleaſed with ſuch as afflict them that pleaſe him.

3. Becauſe Self-pleaſers their life is ſenſual, a life of Senſe and not of Faith, therefore they cannot pleaſe God. *By Faith* Enoch *walked with God and pleaſed God.* Heb. 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* But Senſual Carnal Self-pleaſers, live a life only of Senſe, and can't pleaſe God.

4. Self-pleaſers are Self-ſervers, and therefore cannot ſerve and pleaſe God; *Mat.* 6. 24. ſerving divers Luſts.

5. Self-pleaſers are Soul deſtroyers, and therefore cannot pleaſe God. A Self-pleaſer is a deſtroyer of his own and others Souls.

6. Self-pleaſers are God provokers, and cannot pleaſe God.

Iſa. 2. 6. *Therefore thou haſt forſaken thy people the houſe of* Jacob, *becauſe they be replenished*

replenished from the East, and are Southsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the Children of Strangers. Read *ver.* 7. 8. 9.

When a people please themselves in their own ways and works, God is provoked and displeased with them; *Zec.* 1. 15. *I am very sorely displeased with the heathen that are at ease.*

7. Self-pleasers are Duty defilers, and therefore canot please God in any thing they do. Read these places, *Isa.* 1. 4, 11, 12. *Chap.* 65. 5. *Malach.* 1. 7, 8. This self is death and polution in all our Services and Duties.

8. Self-pleasers are the Royal Lawbreakers, and therefore can't please God. *James* 2. 8. *If thou loves and seeketh to please thy self rather than God, or thy Neighbour, thou art become a Transgressor of the righteous Law of God.*

Directions how to Please God.

1. Beware of Self whatever thou dost, Self is a secret, dangerous Enemy to God and thy Souls life; and under a pretence of Service to God, it secretly opposeth all that is called God or his Worship. *It's the Serpent twining about the Tree of thy heart, and*

and it will ſecretly beguile thee as it did Eve.

2. Would'ſt pleaſe God, then wholly exclude this Enemy Self; own him not in Duty, in Works of Righteouſneſs, acknowledge God in all, and own nothing thine but weakneſs.

3. Would'ſt pleaſe God and not thy ſelf, deſire God to diſcover thy Enemy ſelf to thy ſelf. It's a very great mercy, when it pleaſes God to diſcover ſelf in its depth of deceit, when the Mask and Vizard of this Thief and Murderer is by the light and ſpirit of the Lord plucked off, and Self appears in its own ſhape, and it's in order to his deſtruction, when he's made known: as *Paul* ſpeaks of the Man of Sin, *which indeed is this grand Enemy Self.*

2 *Theſ.* 2.8. *And then ſhall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the Spirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming.*

4. If thou would'ſt pleaſe God, then delight thy ſelf in thoſe things that are pleaſing to God.

Theſe are ſome of them.

1. Integrity and Sincerity of heart is pleaſing to God.

Pſal. 51. 6, 19. *The Lord loveth or is pleaſed*

ſed with Truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts ſhalt thou make known Wiſdom: thou ſhalt be pleaſed with the Sacrifice of the Righteous.

2. The Lord is well pleaſed with Acts of Mercy and Righteouſneſs.

Mic. 6 ver. 7, 8. Will the Lord be pleaſed with Thouſands of Rams, or with Ten thouſands of Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my firſt born for my Tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my Soul? He hath ſhewed thee, O man what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God? Heb. 13. 16. To do good and diſtribute, forget not, for with ſuch ſacrifice God is well pleaſed.

3. The Lord is pleaſed with a Soul reſigning himſelf to him by Faith. *Abraham believed and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs,* Rom. 4 20. 21, 22. Heb. 11. 17, 18, 19.

4. The Lord is pleaſed and takes pleaſure in ſuch as fear him, and hope in his Mercy. *Pſal.* 147. 11. And if thou delighteſt in God, thou wilt delight in ſuch as fear God.

Pſal. 119. 63. *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee and keep thy Precepts.*

5. *The Lord is well pleaſed for his Righteouſneſs*

ouſneſs ſake, and he will magnifie his Law, and make it very honourable ; Iſa. 42.22.

And if thou art a pleaſer of God, then the Law of God will be thy delight and pleaſure, Pſal. 1.1. *His delight is in his Law*, Pſ. 119. 16. *I will delight my ſelf in thy Statutes*, verſ. 24. *Thy Teſtimonies are my delight and my Councellors*; verſ. 35. *Make me to go in the Path of thy Commandments, for therein do I delight* ; verſ. 47. *I will delight my ſelf in thy Commandments which I have loved* ; verſ. 70. *Thy Law is my delight* ; verſ. 77. *Let thy tender Mercies come unto me, that I may live, for therein do I delight.* verſ. 174. *I have longed for thy ſalvation, O Lord, & thy law is my delight.*

All which is to expreſs, the pleaſing delight *David* had in Gods Law.

6. The Lord is exceedingly pleaſed with his dear Son.

2 Pet. 1. 17. *For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the Excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed.* Jeſus Chriſt was the delight and pleaſure of God. and was pleas'd greatly in the work of his Redemption, accompliſhed by his Death and Paſſion ; he beheld the travel of his Soul, and was we pleaſed and ſatisfied. And *Iſa.* 42. 1. *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth*

lighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles.

Now the true pleasers of God do exceedingly please themselves in Christ, he is the only Object of their Delight and Pleasure, their Joy and Treasure, and they delight in that Contrivement of Redemption, Recodciliation and Salvation by him, and Sanctification through him, and Glorification with him.

5. *Direction*, Would'st thou not be a Self-pleaser but a God-pleaser? O then please thy self, or delight thy self only in the Lord, and whatever is of him: please thy self in his pleasure and eternal purpose concerning Man, and delight and admire the same, who doth all things according to the purpose and pleasure of his own Will.

2. Please thy self in all his continued Providences, though some of them may be cross to thee.

3. Please thy self in his Precept, though irksom to thy Corrupt Nature.

4. Please thy self with his many gracious Promises, and by Faith confide in Gods faithfulness in them.

6. *Direction*, Would'st please God, then do nothing wilfully and pleasingly as may displease God. Please not thy self in any wise whereby God may be displeased.

Grieve

Grieve not the Holy Spirit whereby you are Sealed. Quench not the Spirit.

It was so in the Case of *David* with the Wife of *Uriah*, he pleas'd himself and his Lust, but read 2 Sam. 11. ult. David *sent and fetch'd her to his House, and she became his Wife, and bare him a Son, but the thing that* David *had done displeased the Lord.*

Five Characters of a Self-pleaser, that we may know him as we shall meet him in our hearts.

1. He is one that hath too great Reflection upon himself, viewing all his own Actions with too great a delight, a proud Boaster; *Jehu* like, *Come see the Zeal I have for the Lord*; 2 King. 10. 16.

2. He pleaseth himself in those outward Acts and Habits, more than in an inward sanctified Heart and Life.

3. He is a great Vilifier of others, that himself might seem Eminent. Pharisee like, *I am not as other Men, or as this Publican.*

4. He is one whom all his Actions, whether relating to the External or Internal Life, tends and bends towards his own self ends.

5. He

5. He is a great Flatterer of Men in their Lusts for the promoting his self interest.

3. Observation.

That such as are Pleasers of God are most fit and meet to be Men Pleasers.

They are Men pleasers on a good Account who are such as do please God. Would we desire to please our Neighbours, then be sure to walk so as we may please the Lord.

Scripture Arguments.

1. Such as please the Lord, so walk as approved of God, who trieth the Heart.

1 *Thes.* 2. 4. *But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing Men, but God, which trieth our Hearts.*

A God pleaser in all his Actions, Ways, Duties, and whole Conversation, seeks to approve his Heart to God, the great Heart searcher and trier; and therefore are most fit to please Men: for if approved of God, and faithful to God, we shall be faithful to man and approved of him.

2. Such as please God are most fit to be pleasers of Men, for the very same Law that commands us to *Love the Lord with all our hearts*, commands us also, *To love our Neighbours as our selves.*

1 John 4. last. *And this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, should love his Brother also.*

3. *Argument*, If we Argue according to Reason from the greater to the less, if in truth we love our Creator whom we have not seen, shall we not love our Neighbour whom we see continually before us.

And again, on the contrary, if we do not love our Neighbour whom we see, how can we love our God whom we see not.

1 John 4. 20. *He that loveth not his Brother, whom he hath seen, how can he say he loves God whom he hath not seen.*

If we are not faithful in the less, we may well question it in the greater; and if faithful in the greater, in our pleasing God, surely we shall also in the lesser, pleasing Men.

4. *Argument*, The Man whose ways please the Lord, all Men shall be at peace with him, yea every thing prospereth, and is pleasing to him, and he to all and every thing; *Psal.* 119. *Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.*

Prov. 16. 7. *when a Mans ways please the Lord, he maketh his Enemies to be at peace with him*, and Job 5. 23. *Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee, thou shalt know that thy Tabernacle shall be in peace.*

5. *Argu-*

4. *Argument*, The Godly Man, 'tis his care and ſtudy to pleaſe God and his Neighbour, and in pleaſing God he ſeeks to pleaſe his Neighbour, and in pleaſing his Neighbour he aims at pleaſing God.

Pſal. 112. 1. compar'd with 5 v. *Bleſſed is the Man that feareth God, and greatly delights in his Commandment.* And what follows, *He is a good man and lendeth, and ſhews favour, yea he will order his Affairs with diſcretion.*

6. A God-pleaſing Soul, 'tis his deſire and endeavour to be like God, and the Man who imitates God, be ſure ſhall be a Man-pleaſer Righteouſly.

Be merciful as your Heavenly Father is merciful.

Eph. 5. 1, 2. *Be ye followers of God as dear Children, and walk in Love, even as Chriſt hath loved us.*

7. A God-pleaſer is a fit Man-pleaſer, for oft-times he diſpleaſeth himſelf to pleaſe his Neighbour, and ſo our Bleſſed Lord, whoſe ſteps all upright hearts endeavour to follow. In the words following, the Text which are a Reaſon given to Confirm the truth of Neighbour-pleaſing, Chriſt himſelf pleaſed not himſelf. So a good Man, it's his deſire and endeavour to pleaſe his Neighbour, though contrary to his own

will, yea, though he displeaseth himself by it.

8 A God-pleaser most meet to be a Man-pleaser, for he's no respecter of persons, he is impartial in his pleasing his Neighbour, he observes that Rule to please his Enemies as well as Friends, the froward as well as the gentle, him as doth him a bad turn as he that doth him a good one. Read *Matth.* 5. from *vers.* 43 to 48. *Rom.* 12. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink.* This is a Gospel-man pleaser, that doth thus.

And thus *Paul* would have Gospel Servants, Gospel Believers, walk so to their Masters.

1 Pet. 2. 8. *Be subject to your Masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but to the froward.*

9. God-pleasers most fit Men-pleasers, because whatever they do as to Men, they do out of conscience as to God, having an Eye to Gods Glory, and serving their Generations; therefore God-pleasing Children do honour and obey their Parents as in the Lord: this is right, *Eph.* 6. 1. And Godly and God-pleasing Servants serve their Masters in singleness of heart, not as Men-pleasers, but as fearing God, *Col.* 3. 22.

And

And thus ſubjects are to be ſubject to the Higher Power, as having no power but what is ordained of God; he being the Miniſter of God.

Rom. 13. 5. *Wherefore you muſt needs be ſubject not only for Wrath but for Conſcience ſake,* 1 *Pet.* 2 13. *Submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lords ſake.*

Application.

By way of Information.

1. It may inform us the Cauſe why men are ſo diſorderly in their lives, ſo full of Contention, Strife, Envy, Malice, Hatred, Oppreſſions, Offences, Scandals, Reproaches, Perſecutions, and every evil work: Men walk not as Men, but as Bruit Beaſts each to other. Men are Subtil, Treacherous, and pleaſe themſelves or their own wills, though to the deſtruction of their Neighbours.

James 3. 14, 15. *If ye have bitter envying and ſtrife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not againſt the Truth.*

This Wiſdom and Craft in deceiving your Neigbours for your ſelf Advantage, and lying one to another, and bitter Envying and Strife never came from God, it never ſaw God, neither are theſe Actions

the Effects of your love to God, but they are earthly, ſenſual, and deviliſh, and *Chap.* 4. 1. *Whence comes Wars and Fightings amongſt you, come they not hence, even of your Luſts that War in your Members?* ver. 4. He who will ſeek the Friendſhip of the World, ſhall be an Enemy to God.

2. It may alſo inform us the Cauſe of thoſe Curſes and Judgments that have fallen upon Mens Eſtates, Houſes, Relations. Oh 'tis by reaſon Men have not learned this Duty of Pleaſing each other, and doing in all things to others as we would be done unto our ſelves. Many times very near Relations may be as Thorns in our Sides, and Pricks in our Eyes: Our Eſtates Conſumed, and may not the Cauſe be our abuſe of thoſe Mercies, our Unrighteous-dealing to our Brethren, our Unmercifulneſs to our Brethren, Friends and Relations, our Oppreſſing the Poor by unjuſt dealings, our neglect in Pleaſing our Neighbours, and loving them as our own hearts. *Zophar* one of *Job's* Friends ſaith of a wicked man, *Job.* 20. 10. *That his Children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the Poor, and his hands ſhall reſtore their goods:* Thoſe as would not ſeek to pleaſe their Neighbours, but rather diſpleaſe, oppreſs, grieve, rob, ſpoil, and deſtroy; as they have done, it ſhall be done to them, their Children ſhall ſeek

to

to pleaſe the Poor and cannot, and ſhall be made to deliver up or reſtore the Poors ill gotten Goods. And as this is true Perſonally, ſo its as true Nationally.

Kings, Princes, and Governours, ſhould protect the Poor who are Godly, and encourage thoſe that do well, but it inſtead of being thus Men-pleaſers, they are Grievous and Oppreſſors and Perſecutors; ſurely God will viſit for theſe things.

Mark that place 2 *Chron.* 10. 7. Rehoboam *was counſel'd by the Old men, that he ſhould pleaſe the people, and ſpeak good words, and deal kindly with them.* The Young-mens Counſel was he ſhould deal roughly with them, and more heavily Oppreſs them then his Father did. But what came of it, *Ten Tribes was rent from him.*

3. Obſervation.

To be Men-pleaſers is not good, unleſs we pleaſe them for their good.

To be a Neigbour-pleaſer is not good, unleſs in our pleaſing them for their good, minding, deſigning and endeavouring their good, profit and benefit.

Proofs.

2 *Cor.* 10. 33. *Even as I pleaſe all men in all things, not ſeeking my own profit, but the profit of many.*

1 *Cor.* 10. 24. *Let no Man ſeek his own, but every man another's Wealth.*

Phil. 2. 4. *Look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others.*

If his own and his Neighbours good come in Competition together, he will more mind his Neighbours then his own.

If his own and his Neigbours honour and eſteem fall in together, he will prefer his Neigbours before his own.

Rom. 12. 10. *Be kindly affectionate one to another, in honour preferring one another.*

Phil. 2. 3. *Let each eſteem other better then himſelf.*

And whatever man-pleaſing comes not under this Notion of pleaſing for his good, namely minding, ſeeking, endeavouring, after our Neighbours good, profit, commodity, peace, health, wealth, proſperity, honour, eſteem, credit, and every ways his good as he would his own, he is not a fit Man-pleaſer but a Self-pleaſer, which is Abomination to God, and plainly evinceth that we are not the true Servants of God.

Gal. 1. 10. *If I ſhould ſeek to pleaſe men, that is ſo far as ſtands with ſelf intereſt, I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt*; and ſpeaking of falſe Teachers and Hirelings, he ſaith, *ſuch ſerve not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own Bellies, and have mens perſons in admiration, be-*

cauſe

cauſe of advantage. The Conſideration of which may be a juſt reproof to the abomination of Self and Men pleaſers; theſe pleaſe Men for hurt and not good; how many are there that in deſiring to pleaſe one, bring deſtruction upon many. Thus *Herod to pleaſe his Daughter* Herodias, *for that ſhe pleaſed his filthy fancy in the dance, at her requeſt off muſt go* John Baptiſt's *head; after that he vexed certain of the Church, and killed* James *the Brother of* John *with the Sword, and becauſe it pleaſed the Jews he proceeded further, and put* Peter *in Priſon, Acts* 12. 1, 2, 3, 4.

4. Obſervation.

Then pleaſe we our Neighbours for their beſt good, when in our pleaſing them we mind and endeavour their Soul edifying, and Soul ſaving good.

Proofs.

1 *Cor.* 9. 19, 20, 21. Read it, *I am* ſaith he, *made all things to all men, that I might gain, and by all means ſave ſome.*

Chap. 10. 33. *Even as I pleaſe all men in all things, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be ſaved.*

Conſide-

Considerations.

1. Consider Soul edifying, Soul gaining and saving, ought to be our chiefest end and aim in our pleasing our Neighbours, in as much as the profit and welfare of a Soul is infinite more then the whole World, and so is the disadvantage also; *What profit if a man gain the whole World and lose his own or anothers Soul? Is not the body more than rayment, life more then the body, and the Soul infinite more than both.*

2. Consider, shall we be more diligent, careful and desirous to gain a friends favour, then gaining a friend into favour with God.

Prov.29.26. Many seek the Rulers favour, but every mans Judgment cometh from the Lord.

3. Consider while we only please men for their external good, we do but as men, but in minding their internal or Souls good, we approve our selves to be Christians. As Sinners we may please, profit and benefit one another for outward good: But it is the property of Saints to please each other for their Souls edification.

Jude 20. But ye beloved, building up your selves on your most holy faith.

1 Thes 5. 11. *Wherefore comfort your selves together, and edifie one another, even as also ye do.*

2 Cor. 10. 8. *Our Authority which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction*, Chap. 13. 10. Read also *Acts* 9. 31.

In pleasing Men for their Souls good, we shew our selves to be more then meer Men, Christians, Saints, Believers, Gods Servants.

4. It is for this very end that God hath given us gifts differing one from another. Judgment, Discretion, Wisdom, Prudence, Grace, Parts, Indowments, Abilities of Memory, Utterance, Affections, Learning, and all manner of Gifts and Abilities, Rational, Moral and Divine, that they may be helpers one to another in the best things. Soulgaining, Soul-edifying, Soul-saving good; fore-mentioned place, 2 *Cor.* 10. 8. *For though I should boast somewhat of our Authority which the Lord hath given us for your Edification.* And therefore those gifts which were in the Churches of Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, Pastors, Evangelists, helps in Government, Tongues and Miracles, was given for the edifying the Body of Christ, *Eph.* 4. 12. *And so every ones gift is given for the edifying one another.*

5. Soul-edifying hath formerly carried Christians

Christians even out of themselves, and besides themselves for the Souls good of their Brethren; thus *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 15, 19. *I will very gladly spend and be spent for you*; or *as some read for your souls*: We do all things dearly beloved for your Edification.

6. Consider the abundant good that comes of it, both to our selves and others. To our selves the peace, joy, comfort, and refreshing, that we have in our own Souls, in our faithful Service to the Lord, and the abundant good and profit that comes to others thereby, 1. To our own particulars, *They that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever*, Dan. 12. 3. 2 To others, *James* 5. 20. *He that converteth a Sinner to God, or from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from death, and hide a multitude of Sins.* Jude 20. 22, 23. *But ye beloved, building up your selves in your most holy Faith, and of some having compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire.*

Application.

By way of reflection upon the deportment of most professors or professed Christians in our Times.

How few are there that in their seeking to please men, do at all once mind the Soul edifying, Soul-saving, Soul-healing, Soul-reforming

reforming, Soul-comforting, and Soul-converting good.

How is the Christian, godly and good Neighbourhood abused in vain and prophane Visitations, good Fellowships as they call it, Merry Meetings, Wakes, Whitsun-Ales, Gossipings, Feastings, and such like, which prove a Nursery of Profaneness and Abomination in Youth. And upheld by the Elder People, which should rather be Examples of Gravity, Sobriety, Chastity, Temperance; and instead thereof, these Meetings are not for Edification but Destruction, wherein they edifie or build up each other in Sin and Profaneness, Drunkenness, Gluttony, Sinful pleasure, abuse of Gods name, of precious time, and of his good Creatures.

Good Fellowship is indeed good, and good Neigbourhood is good, but what's become of it, since the apostacy of the Churches? we never had a good Fellowship since Christians went from house to house, eating their bread together in singleness of heart, and every one accounting nothing he had his proper own; and when they came together it was to speak one to another, to comfort, strengthen, instruct one another, and nothing to proceed out of the mouths of each other,

but

but what was good and profitable, ſound and ſavory words ſeaſoned with grace, and ſpeaking to one another in Pſalms, Hymns, and ſpiritual Songs, with grace in their hearts.

By way of Inſtruction.

Oh beware of pleaſing men, ſo as that of neceſſity thou muſt diſpleaſe God and wound thy own Soul. It was *Pauls* Counſel to Young *Timothy*.

1 Tim. 3. 16. *Take heed to thy Self and to the Doctrine, and continue in it, for ſo thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf and them that hear thee.*

Several Particulars wherein we may Edifie the Souls of our Neighbours.

1. In Seaſonable reproof, *Lev.* 19. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke him and ſuffer him not to ſin*; tell him his fault between thee and him. Read *Mat.* 18. 15.

2. In wholeſome Inſtructions and Exhortations, *exhorting one another daily, while it is called to day, leſt any of you be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*; Heb. 3. 13. Sins ſtrength and deceit is abated, and many times the heart ſoftned by good Exhortations and Inſtructions.

3. Praying

3. Praying one for another is for the Souls Edification.

Pray one for another.

1 John 5. 15. *If any Man see his Brother sin a sin which is not to death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.*

4. Provoking one another to goodness or good works, is for the Souls good of each other.

Heb. 10. 24. *And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works;* stir up the minds of one another, 2 *Pet.* 1. 13. and *Cap.* 3. 1.

5. Holy and Christian Converse and Conference may be a means of good to the Souls of each other.

6. Forgiving Trespasses, and doing good for evil, many times is of use to convince and gain a poor Soul.

7. An Exemplary Conversation is sometimes a means of gaining and saving a Soul. *Let your light so shine before Men, that they seeing your good works, may glorifie your Heavenly Father;* 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2. *They may be won by the Conversation of their Wives, while they behold your Chast Conversation.*

8. By improving our Abilities, Gifts, and Indowments, and not hiding them under a Bushel;

Buſhel; but exerciſe all our ſtrength for the good of Souls. Paul *ſaith he could ſpend and be ſpent for the good of Souls.* And denying our own ſelf intereſts, that we may pleaſe them in the good and welfare of their Souls, 2 *Cor.* 12. 15, 19.

The Spiritual Poors Right to the Kingdom.

Mat. 5. 3.

Bleſſed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the Words, Three things contained.

1. A Bleſſing pronounced, and that out of the mouth of our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour.

2. The Bleſſing it ſelf is a Heavenly Bleſſing, of a Heavenly Nature, not of the Earth but the Kingdom of Heaven.

3. The perſons who have a true right to this Heavenly Bleſſing are thus qualified poor in Spirit: Their's the Kingdom.

Ob-

Obſervation.

That the truly poor in ſpirit, or ſpiritually poor, have a right to all thoſe ſpiritual and glorious Priviledges pertaining to the Kingdom of grace here, and of glory hereafter.

Proofs.

Luke 12. 33. *Fear not little Flock, it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you the Kingdom:* Pſal. 84. 11. *The Lord will give grace and glory,* &c. James 2. 5. *The Poor of this world Rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom,* Eph. 1. 4. *Who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in Heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.*

In the making out of this Truth I ſhall demonſtrate by Scripture.

1. Some of thoſe Spiritual benefits pertaining to the Kingdom of grace.

2. Some of thoſe glorious Priviledges and Benefits belonging to the Kingdom of glory.

3. What right the Godly Poor have to the Kingdom, their right maintained in 8 particulars, or an eighth fold right which the Spiritual poor have to the Kingdom.

4. Notes or Characters of ſuch as are truly poor in Spirit.

1. Some of thoſe ſpiritual benefits pertaining to the Kingdom of grace, as being the Spiritual poors right and intereſt.

1. The Covenant of grace is one ſpiritual benefit pertaining to the Kingdom, and indeed the ſum of all, *Jer.* 31. 33, 34. Which Covenant hath theſe ſix benefits, or ſix branches of this Covenant.

1. *That God will be a God unto them, and they his People.*

2. *That God will write his Laws in their hearts and in their inward parts.*

3. *That theſe his Children ſhall be taught of the Lord only.*

4. *That he will forgive their Iniquities, and remember their Sins no more.*

5. *That it is a Covenant of Peace, of Gods Peace, which ſhall never be removed,* Iſa. 54. 10.

6. *Tis Everlaſting, I will make an Everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure Mercies of* David; *Iſa.* 55. 3. and *Cap.* 61. 18.

2. The promulgation of the Goſpel is a Spiritual benefit pertaining to the Kingdom, and is the godly poors Right, the ſpiritual poors Priviledge, *Mat.* 11. 5 *The poor have the Goſpel Preach'd to them*; Luk. 4. 18. *To Preach the Goſpel to the Poor,* Iſa. 61. 1. Read it.

3. The precious promiſes are another ſpiritual priviledge pertainining to the Kingdom of grace, and are the poors, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Unto us are given exceeding great and precious promiſes*, Gal. 3. 16. *To* Abraham *and to his Seed were the Promiſes made.*

4. Goſpel

4. Gospel Ministers, Ministry, and Ordinances, are the spiritual and godly poors right; *Whether* Paul *or* Apollo, *or* Cephas, *all are yours, and ye are Christs*, 1 Cor. 3. 22. Prophets, Apostles, Pastors, Teachers, Miracles, Gifts, Tongues, all is for the Edifying of the Body of Christ, see *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. compared with 1 *Cor.* 12. 27, 28. Read them.

5. The Holy Scriptures are the godly poors right, as being a benefit pertaining to Gods Kingdom of grace, and they are for to perfect and fitly furnish the Man of God, or Children of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. *And if they who through patient waiting upon God for his Teachings in them that have the comfort of them*, Rom. 15. 4. *And through the faith which little* Timothy *had in Christ, the Scriptures became able to make him wise unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3.

6. All things that pertain to life, and godliness is the godly Poors Right. 2 Pet. 1. 3. *According as he hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.*

2. Some of those glorious priviledges pertaining to the Kingdom of Glory, which are also a Christians Right, the godly Poors Right; *for theirs is the Kingdom.*

1. To be glorified together with Christ; *Rom.* 8. 17. *If we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.*

Col. 3. 3. *When Christ our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in Glory*: Phil. 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body.*

2. To be ever with the Lord, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. is a very glorious Priviledge.

3. And to Reign with him, another blessed and glorious benefit pertaining to the Kingdom of Heaven, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him,* Rev. 22. 5. *And that for ever and ever.*

4. And sit on the Throne with him, *Rev.* 3. 21. *Shall sit upon the Throne with me.* Mat. 19. 28. *Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the Throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon* 12 *Thrones.*

5. In Presence and Communion of *an innumerable Company of Saints and Angels,* Heb. 12. 22. Rev. 7. 9. *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude which no man could number of all Nations, Kindreds, and Tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, cloathed with White Robes.*

6. They shall hunger nor thirst no more, *but the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, shall feed them, and lead them to living Fountains of Waters,* Rev. 7. 17.

7. And all Tears shall be wiped away, *Rev.* 7. 17.

7. 17. and Cap. 21. 4. *And God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor any more Pain.*

8. *And they shall sing a new Song, which no man shall or can learn but the hundred and forty four thousand which are redeemed from the Earth, and had not defiled their garments with Women*, Rev. 14. 3, 4.

These are some of those glorious benefits and priviledges pertaining to the Kingdom of Heaven, which all the spiritually poor, or poor in spirit, have an undoubted right unto; but in truth the Tongue of Men and Angels cannot express the glory of that Kingdom. *As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*; 1 Cor. 2. 9.

It is called an eternal weight of glory. *And a joy unspeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8.

3. By what right the Saints, or spiritually poor, may lay claim to the Kingdom of Heaven; surely their claim and interest is surely safe and firm, they have a good evidence and assurance to the Kingdom: their right is by *Jure Divino*, by divine right, and their right is a lawful right: As will appear in these points of right following: *Theirs is the Kingdom.*

1. By right of Filiation, Son-ship and Heir-ship, this is a birth-right, Heirs and joynt Heirs with Christ: *The Poor of this World, rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom,* James 2. 5. *The Bastard shall not inherit the Kingdom, 'tis the true Heirs.* What saith the Scripture, *Cast out the Bond Woman and her Son, for the Son of the Bond-Woman shall not be Heir with the Free-Woman, for they that are of the Faith of* Abraham *are the Children of* Abraham; *Gal.* 4. 30.

2. Theirs is the Kingdom by right of donation and free gift, *Its your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* The Lord will give you grace and glory, 1 Tim. 6. 17. *The living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.* 2 Pet. 1. 3. *According to his divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness.* All that pertain to this Kingdom, all ways and means tending thereto, is the free gift of God.

3. Theirs is the Kingdom by a right of Conversion and Translation, *Col.* 1 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his Dear Son.*

4 By a right of Gods free choice and election, theirs is the Kingdom: *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual*

blessings

blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: This is the blessing, theirs is the Kingdom. But by what right are they to hold and enjoy it, see next verse, *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the World.* And St. *Peter* calls them *a chosen generation, a peculiar people,* 1 Pet. 2. 9.

5. By right of Purchase and Redemption, theirs is the Kingdom. *Eph.* 1. 14. *Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the Redemption of his purchased possession.* The Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood: *Rev.* 5. 9. *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every Kindred, Tongue, People, and Nation, and hast made us Kings and Priests unto our God.*

6. By right of Marriage Union Gods Poor have right to the Kingdom of God; *Jer.* 3. 14. *I am married unto you, saith the Lord, and this is the marriage right and priviledge, I will bring you to* Zion: *Rev.* 19. 7, 8. *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour to him, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready*: And behold the Marriage right, *To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linnen, and the fine linnen is the Saints Righteousness: Blessed are they that are called to the Marriage of the Lamb*: Rev. 21. ver. 2. and ver. 9, 10.

And I John *saw the holy City, New* Jeruſalem, *coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride for her Husband: The great City, the holy* Jeruſalem, *deſcending out of Heaven from God: having the Glory of God, and her light was like unto a Stone moſt precious.* All to ſignifie the exceeding ſplendor, beauty, brightneſs, infinite and tranſcendent glory of the Saints, united to Chriſt, the matchleſs portion, dowry, and inheritance of the Saints in light.

7. The Kingdom of Heaven, of Grace, Glory, Eternal life, and all pertaining thereunto, with all Priviledges, Immunities, Rights, Prerogatives, belonging to the Crown of life, is the proper right, intereſt, and claim of every poor Saint of God or Gods poor, Spiritual poor, and that by right of Conqueſt; they are Conquerors with their King, yea they are more than Conquerors. Read their Conqueſts, *Rom* 8. 36, 37, 38, 39. alſo *Heb.* 11. later end, *Rev.* 2. 26. *He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the Nations, and he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron*, &c. *And I will give him the Morning Star.* Again, *Rev.* 3. 21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne even as I*, &c. Again *Rev.* 21. 7. *He that overcometh ſhall inherit all things*, &c.

8. By right of Covenant theirs is the Kingdom,

Kingdom; heir's of the promiſe, and again heir's of the Kingdom which God hath promiſed before unto them. Read *Gal.* 3. 8, 9. *Which Covenant God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe, confirmed by Oath,* Heb. 6. 7. That by two immutable things in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolation, and ſo to lay hold of that bleſſed hope of eternal life ſet before us. So that whatever they do or ſhall injoy, 'tis by a Covenants right.

Twelve Notes or Characters of ſuch as are truly Poor in Spirit.

1. Such are truly poor in ſpirit, who are become wholly emptied out of all their own Creature Dependancies and Sufficiencies, and can and do own nothing as their own, but their inſufficiences and weakneſſes, *Phil.* 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law, but the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith:* 2 Cor. 3. 5. *Not as we are ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God.*

2. Such are truly poor in Spirit, who are of a broken and contrite ſpirit, every touch

touch of God upon the heart melts and breaks the heart to pieces, *Isa.* 66. 2. *But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit.*

3. Such are truly poor in Spirit, that are of an humble Spirit, such as lie low before the Lord, that trembles at his word, and trembles at his rod, and trembles at his goodness, and stands in awe of God, and sins not, but serves the Lord with fear and trembling.

4. Such are truly poor in spirit, who be of a patient and contented spirit, and takes all patiently and contentedly, as from the Lord, without murmuring or discontent, all conditions are alike to him, *Eccl.* 7. 8. *The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit*; such a one was good *Job*; *The Lord gives and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21. and 2. 10. And again, *Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil?* Thus *Paul* had learned, *Philip.* 4. 12. *In every estate to be contented, to abound and to suffer want, to be full and to be hungry.*

5. Such are Gods poor or poor in Spirit, who willingly and unweariedly wait upon the Lord; *Zech.* 11. 11. *The poor of the Flock waited upon me, saith the Lord. I waited long and sought the Lord*, said *David.* Prov. 8. 34. *Blessed is the Man that heareth me, watching daily*

daily at my gates, waiting at the Posts of my doors.

6. Such are truly poor in Spirit or spiritually poor, who have an Eye open to see, and be sensible of their Poverty: Christs Counsel to the Church *Laodicea, Rev.* 3. 17, 18. *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be cloathed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.*

7. Such are spiritually poor or poor in Spirit, who indeed and in truth are so, and don't dissemble a poverty of Spirit *Prov.* 13. 7. *There are that make themselves poor, yet hath great riches.* Those are the hypocritical and dissembling poor, like begging Friers that wander up and down begging of Alms for Gods sake, and such and such a Saints sake, and yet have great possessions of their own. *Col.* 2. 18, 23. *Let not man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puft up by his fleshly mind. Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.* 8. Such

8. Such are poor in Spirit who are painful and laborious poor, that are diligent and laboriour in the work of the Lord, and not slothful in business, but *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*; Rom. 12. *Paul* desired that Salutations in the Lord might be given to *Tryphena* and *Tryphosa*, and the beloved *Persis*, who laboured in the Lord; *Rom.* 16. 12. 1 *Thess.* 1. 4. *Remembring your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

9. Such are poor in Spirit that are ready to serve others or be serviceable to others in any Office of Love or Work wherein they may be profitable to their Brethren, minding the good and profit of their Brethren before their own; this was *Pauls* Spirit when he said, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As poor, yet making many Rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things*; Philip. 2. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered upon the Sacrifice and Service of your Faith I joy and rejoyce with you all.*

10. Such are Spiritually poor who in the tenderness of their Consciences have suffered loss for the Lord and his Truth, and for keeping a good Conscience have been persecuted, reproached, plunder'd, spoiled, wasted, robbed, and kill'd all the day long for the sake of Truth, and have suffered joyfully the spoiling of their Goods;

know-

knowing that in Heaven they have a more indurable ſubſtance. Read *Heb.* 11. 37, 38, 39.

11. Such are poor in Spirit whom the Lord hath made ſo by his own hand upon them, and the Operations of his own Spirit. The Lord hath emptied them, the Lord hath broken them, the Lord hath laid his hand upon them, the Lord hath afflicted them, ſtript them out of all their comforts. Thus *Naomi*, Ruth 1. 20, 21. ſaith ſhe, *Call me not* Naomi, *call me* Mara, *for the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me; I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why then call ye me* Naomi, *ſeeing the Lord hath teſtified againſt me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?*

12. Such are truly ſpiritually poor or poor in Spirit, whom nought but Spirit can ſatisfie their deſires, but ſtill remain importunate ſeekers to the Throne of Grace, and though in patience poſſeſſing themſelves they can bear a delay, and ſometimes a denial of their deſires, yet they beg ſtill, and 'tis for nought elſe but Spirit, Life, Living Bread, Living Water, and nought elſe will or can ſatisfie the hunger of their *Souls*: *Iſa.* 41. 17. *When the poor and needy ſeek water and there's none, and their tongue faileth for Thriſt, I the Lord will hear them. If a Son ask bread will ye give him a ſtone, or*

if

if a fish, will you give him a serpent? All the Worlds Comforts, Delights, Delicacies, and Satisfactions, are but a Stone in comparison of the Bread of Life, and a stinging Serpent to the heavenly Manna, to a spiritual poor and needy *Son*.

God the Keeper of his Israel.

Psal. 121. 5.

The Lord is thy Keeper, &c.

Observation.

That the Lord God is the Keeper and Preserver of his Israel, all his faithful Children and People.

In the opening this blessed and comfortable Truth I shall by Scripture demonstrate:

1. What an Excellent Keeper God is, for that he is
   1. An Almighty Keeper.
   2 A Faithful Keeper.
   3 A Careful Keeper.
   4 A Compassionate Keeper.
   5 A Universal Keeper.
   6 An Everlasting Unchangable Keeper.
2. *Israels* Keeper keeps his People and Children.
   1 From Sin.
   2 From the Worlds Temptations.

3 From

3 From the power of Darkneſs.
4 From Error and Deluſions.
5 From their *Enemies* Cruelty and Hatred.
6 From the fear of Man.
7 From Fainting.
8 From final Falling.

3. The Excellency of *Iſraels* Keeper and Preſerver will be further demonſtrated, if we conſider, as what he keeps and preſerves them from, ſo what he keeps his people in, and that he keeps and preſerves his people.

1 In his Preſence.
2 In his Fear.
3 In his Favour.
4 In his Covenant of Peace.
5 In all their Ways.
6. In their Spiritual Lives.
7 In their Spiritual Rights and juſt Liberties and Priviledges.

Theſe Particulars confirmed by Scripture, and applied by ſome Leſſons which this Truth teaches.

1. *Iſraels* Lord-keeper is an Almighty, All-powerful, and All-ſufficient Keeper. Read *Iſa.* 40. 9, 10. 11, 13, 17, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28. and *Jer.* 32. 18, 19. *The Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of Hoſts, Great in Counſel, and Mighty in Work*: and *Pſ.* 145. *Great is the Lord and greatly to be praiſed, his greatneſs is unchangable*: Again, *Pſ.* 147. 5. *Great is our God,*

God, and of great power, his understanding is infinite: Gen. 17. 1. *I am God Almighty, All-sufficient:* Cap. 15. 1. *I am thy Shield and exceeding great Reward:* and saith *Paul,* 1 *Tim.* 1. 12. *I am perswaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him.*

2 As God is an able and sufficient Keeper, so he is a faithful Keeper. *Psal.* 146. 5, 6. *Happy is he that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help: whose hope is in the Lord his God, that made Heaven and Earth, which keepeth truth for ever, his faithfulness endureth for ever:* 2 Tim. 2. 13. *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself:* 1 Cor. 10. 13. *God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above your ability:* 2 Thess. 5. 23. *I pray God your whole Spirit, Soul and Body be preserved, faithful is he that has called you, who will also do it:* Isa. 11. 5. *Faithfulness is the Girdle of his Reins.*

3 *Israels* Keeper is a careful Keeper: *Ps.* 121. 4. *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* The Lord is watchful over his people, and wakes while they sleep, yea he keeps his Night and Day, and every moment: *Isa.* 27. 3. *I the Lord do keep it, my Vine yard, I will water it every moment, yea I will keep it Night and Day.* O the matchless care that is in the Lord God over his Children and People.

4. The

4. The Lord is ſo careful, ſo tender, and compaſſionate towards his People, he hath compaſſions ſuitable to his care: *Pſal.* 86. 15. *Thou, O Lord, art a God full of Compaſſions*; Pſal. 111. 4. *The Lord is gracious and full of Compaſſions.* The Scripture gives large Teſtimony of the tender Affections and Bowels of Compaſſions that are in God to his Children and People, and ſignified by the moſt tender Compaſſionat Affections that is or may be in any of his Creatures; as of an *Eagle over her young*: Deut. 32. 11. *The pity ſhould be to an Infant caſt forth into the Field*; Ezek. 16. *A Father to his Child*; Pſal. 103. 13. Mal. 3. 17. Jer. 31. 20. *Of a Woman to her ſucking Babe*: Iſa. 49. 15, 16. All to ſignifie the tender Compaſſions that are in God towards his People.

5. *Iſraels* Lord and Keeper is an Univerſal Keeper, his Righteouſneſs *is like great mountains, his judgments are a great deep, he preſerveth man and beaſt*; *Pſal.* 36. 6. The Lord is boundleſs, and keeps and preſerves his by an unlimited power in all places, at all times, and in all conditions, and is not bound up to this or that Sect or Nation, but is the preſerver of his whole *Iſrael* every where.

6. The Lord is an everlaſting and unchangable Keeper, and ſaves his with an

Everlasting Salvation: *Isa.* 26. 13, 14. O *Lord, other Lords besides thee have had Dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy Name; they are dead, thou hast made all their memory to perish*: Again, *Heb.* 1. 10, Yea the *Heavens shall perish, but thou remainest the same, and thy years shall not fail.*

2. Consideration from what Israels Keeper keeps them from.

1. From Sin, therefore hath he given them a Saviour called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins, from the guilt and condemning power of sin by his Death, and from the ruling and reigning power of sin by his Life and Spirit; *Psal.* 121. 7. *The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, the Lord shall preserve thy Soul*: Psal. 119. 133. *Order my steps in thy word, and suffer not Iniquity to have dominion over me.*

2. The Lord will keep and preserve his people from the inticing Vanities of the World, with it's deceitful snares, its honours, glories, riches, pleasures; and though 'twas all shewed to the Son of God, yet it could have any power over him; and so all the born of God overcome the World, because greater is that power that is in them, then that as is in the World; and therefore *Paul* says, *The World is Crucified to me, and I am Crucified to the World.*

3. God

3. God doth and will keep his people from the hour and power of Darkneſs: *Rev.* 3. 10. *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of Temptation.* Thus *Simon* was kept, that his Faith ſhould not fail, though Darkneſs came over him: and *Paul* found a ſufficiency in the Grace of God to preſerve him when tempted to glory above meaſure; 2 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9.

4. The Lord doth preſerve and keep his people out of ſpiritual Deluſions, Spirits of Error, falſe Spirits, falſe Chriſts, falſe or pretended Anointings. But *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: becauſe greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world*; 1 John 4. 1, 2, 3, 4. Iſa. 29. 24. *They that erred in Spirit ſhall come to underſtand, and they that murmured ſhall learn doctrine.* Many of Gods dear ones have erred in their Minds, Judgments and Underſtandings, while their Hearts have been in God, and deſirous to know the pure mind of God, and have grudg'd and murmured one againſt another: one Tribe, Family, or Separation, grudging, murmuring, and complaining one of another, and judging and excluding one the other, and branding each other with names of Seſtaries, Hereticks, Fanaticks, and what not. Well, the Protector of all the

Tribes and Families of the Earth beholds it, and ſuch of them as are not wholly given up to a Spirit of Error to believe lies, they ſhall come to a good Underſtanding, and ſhall learn Doctrine. Read *Iſa.* 30. 20. and Chap. 35. 8.

5. This Almighty Keeper ſhall keep and preſerve his people from out of the reach of their Enemies Cruelty and Hatred. Read *Rev.* 12. the whole Chapter, how the Lord wonderfully preſerved the Woman, the Church: *Pſal.* 31. 20. *Thou ſhalt hide them in the ſecret of thy preſence, from the pride of man: thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a pavilion, from the ſtrife of tongues.*

6. God Almighty, *Iſraels* Keeper, will keep and preſerve his people from out of the fear of Man *Gen.* 15. 1. *Fear not* Abraham, *I am thy ſhield and exceeding great reward.* Iſa. 35. 4. *Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be ſtrong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and ſave you.* Read alſo *Chap.* 41. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. and verily it is as high a favour to be kept out of the fear of Man, as out of his ſnare.

7. *Iſraels* Keeper will keep and preſerve them from fainting. Do'ſt faint, art thou ſick of Love? thy Beloved will ſtay thee with Flaggons, and comfort thee with Apples,

ples, yea his left hand shall be under thy head, and his right hand embrace thee: *Isa.* 40. 29, 30, 31. The Creator of Heaven and Earth fainteth not, neither is weary in doing thee good. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that hath no might, he increaseth strength; Even the youths shall faint and be weary,* Read forwards.

8. God doth keep all his from falling: Psal. 56. 13. *Thou hast delivered my Soul from death, and wilt not thou keep my feet from falling?* Jude 24, 25. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.* Amen.

In what God keeps his People.

3 Consideration, *Let us consider what it is that this ever blessed Preserver keeps and preserves his people in.*

1. The Lord keeps his people in his presence, in his eye, under his wing, near unto him: *Psal.* 32. 7. And again, *Psal.* 91. 1, 4. *Thou art my hiding place, thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance; I will instruct thee and teach thee, I will guide thee with mine eye:* And again, *He that dwelleth*

in the ſecret of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty: he will cover thee with his Feathers, and under his Wings ſhalt thou truſt.

1. The Lord will keep and preſerve his People in his holy fear, he will uphold and maintain in them a pure fear, according to the Tenor of the New Covenant: Jer. 31. *I will put my fear into their hearts, and they ſhall not depart from me, ſo as they ſhall fear him for his goodneſs in the latter days.*

3. The Lord will keep them in his Covenant of peace, which ſhall never be broken nor made void: *Iſa* 54. 9, 10. *For this Covenant of Peace is as the Waters of* Noah *unto me*, ſaith the Lord, *for as I have ſworn, that the Waters of* Noah *ſhould no more go over the Earth, ſo have I ſworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee.*

4. The Lord will keep them in his favour and loving kindneſs, he will compaſs them about with his favour as with a Shield; *Pſ.* 5. 12. *And in his favour ſhall their Mountain be made ſtrong*, Pſal. 30. 7. *And if my Children forſake my Law*, ſaith the Lord, *and keep not my Covenant, then will I viſit their Tranſgreſſions with the rod, and their Iniquities with ſtripes: Nevertheleſs my loving kindneſs ſhall I not utterly take from him*; Pſal. 89. 32.

5. The

5. The Lord will keep his People in all their ways *Pſal* 91. 11. *He will give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. The paths of the upright is a ſhining light:* 1 Sam. 2. 9. *The Lord will keep the feet of his Saints: He will order their ſteps in his word, and the Law ſhall be a light unto their feet, and a Lamp unto their Paths.*

6. The Lord will keep and preſerve his Peoples lives, not only natural lives, in whom we all live, move and have our being, but the ſpiritual lives of his People, their immortal Souls. *He redeemeth their lives from Deſtruction, and crowneth them with mercies and loving kindneſs;* Pſal. 97. 10. *He preſerveth the Souls of his Saints, and delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked one;* Pſal. 33. 18, 19. *Behold the Eye of the Lord is upon all them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their Souls from Death, and keep them alive in Famine.* Their hearts ſhall live that ſeek the Lord.

7. *Iſraels* Keeper will and doth keep his People, and preſerve and maintain their ſpiritual Liberties and Priviledges againſt all the Powers as ſeek to deſpoil them.

1. God will preſerve their Liberty of Sonſhip. For God hath given them the prerogative of being the Sons of God, which priviledge God will keep, being the privi-

ledge pertaining to the New Covenant: *They shall be my Sons and Daughters saith the Lord.*

2. Their interest in Christ as their King, the Lord will preserve, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion, Psal. 2.*

3. God will maintain their Right in Christ as their Prince and Saviour, ------ *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, and to give repentance to* Israel.

4. Their right and interest in Christ as Chief Bishop of their Souls, the Lord will keep aud maitain in them.

5. Their Right, Interest, and Priviledge in the Lord Jesus, *as the everlasting and high Priest, made not after the Law of a Carnal Commandment, but after the power of an endless life; a Priest for ever after the order of* Melchisedec, *Heb. 7. 15.*

6. Their right and interest in Christ Jesus, as Head of the Body his Church the Lord will keepand maintain against all Popes that has bin since the apostacy, and shall be, that claim that title.

Love, Trust, and keep close to your Keeper.

From what hath been said as to this blessed truth, let it encourage all the Lords People under any denomination whatsoever,

To Love the Lord their Keeper.

To

2. To Truſt in him alone.
3. To Commit all to your Keeper.
4. To keep cloſe to your Keeper.

1. Seeing the Lord is ſo able a Keeper, ſo faithful, careful, compaſſionate, unlimited and univerſal and everlaſting a Keeper, and keeps you in his Fear, in his Covenant of Peace, in his Favour, in his Eye; and keeps them in all their Ways, keeps them in their Lives and Healths, Oh! who would not but love ſuch a Keeper, prize ſuch a Keeper, prefer ſuch a Keeper; and love him with all our hearts, minds, and ſouls: *Pſal.* 31. 23. *O Love the Lord all ye his Saints, for the Lord preſerveth the Faithful.* Love him only, love him above all, love him wholly, and all that is of him; love his Truth, love his Laws, love his Righteous Judgments, love his Appointments, love his Providences, love his Chaſtiſements, love his Word, his Meſſengers and Servants; love whatever is of him, and for him, and from him; love his Chriſt, his Son, love his Image where ever it is: *O Love ye the Lord.*

2 *Truſt in the Lord, for in the Lord* Jehovah *is everlaſting ſtrength:* Believe he is able to keep and preſerve you, and to ſave you from thoſe that are too ſtrong for you.

Believe

Believe that he is Faithful and will do it, and do more then you are able to believe.

Believe that his care is towards you, his tender Compaſſions opened to you.

Believe that he is both able and willing to keep you from Sin, Darkneſs, Temptations, Fears and Faintings, and final falling.

Believe that his preſence is with thee, to keep thee in all thy ways, in his fear and favour, in his everlaſting Covenant.

Believe that greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the World.

3. Commit all to thy Keeper, 1 *Pet.* 4. 9. *Commit the keeping of your Souls to him*, and believe that whatever thou doſt commit to him he will keep.

Keep cloſe to your Keeper, Cleave to the Lord with your whole hearts; keep to your Keeper, and he will keep you and keep cloſe to you and never leave you; *Iſa.* 26. 4. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee: Stay your minds upon the Lord continually, and ſettle it in your hearts, that the Lord is the Keeper of his* Iſrael.

A Bleſ-

A Blessed Hope set before Hopeless Man.

Heb. 6. 18.

That we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us.

Observation.

That the ever blessed God hath set before hopeless Man a blessed hope of Eternal Life in Christ Jesus our Lord and only Saviour.

Proofs.

Eph. 2. 12, 13. *Having no hope, and without God in the World: But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* Zech. 9. 11. *As for thee, by the blood of thy Covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn ye to the refuge or strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.*

And this blessed hope was set before us hopeless Men.

1. In purpose before the World began; *Tit. 1. 2. In hope of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lie promised before the World began.* And Christ Jesus was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the World.

2. This

2. This bleſſed hope of Eternal Life in Chriſt was promiſed to our Fathers, to *Adam* preſently upon his Fall: *I will put enmity between thy ſeed and her ſeed; it ſhall bruiſe thy heel, and thou ſhalt break his head*: and promis'd to *Abraham*, *That in his ſeed ſhould all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed.* *Paul* ſtood for it; *Acts* 26. 6, 7, *And now I ſtand and am judged for the hope of the promiſe made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promiſe our twelve tribes, inſtantly ſerving God, hope to come.*

3. This bleſſed hope of Eternal Life by Chriſt, was manifeſtly ſet before us in the appearing of our Lord and Saviour in the Fleſh, 1 *Pet.* 1. 20, 21. He (the Lord Jeſus Chriſt) *was manifeſt in theſe laſt days for you, who do by him believe in God, that raiſed him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.*

4. This bleſſed hope is revealed by his Spirit, and by the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation we come to know the Hope of his Calling; *Eph.* 1. 18, 19. and by the *Spirit do we wait for the hope of Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, *Gal.* 5. 5.

5. In the Teſtimony of Scripture is this bleſſed hope ſet before us: *Rom.* 15. 4. *For whatſoever things was written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience*

ence and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Search the Scriptures, they teſtifie of me, ſaith Chriſt. To him give all the Prophets Witneſs.

2. Obſervation.

That although there is a bleſſed hope of Eternal Life ſet before hopeleſs Man, yet Believers who have by Faith fled to the refuge, and laid hold on the hope, have right to Eternal Life. Gal. 5. 5. *We through the Spirit wait for the hope of Righteouſneſs by faith. Chriſt in you the hope of Glory. Lay hold on Eternal Life:* 1 Tim. 6. 12. 19.

Ten Qualifications or Characters of ſuch who have laid hold on the hope of Eternal Life ſet before us.

1. He is one that purifieth himſelf, he cannot hold this Faith, nor lay hold of this hope, but in a pure Conſcience: 1 *John* 3. 3. *He that hath this hope purifieth himſelf as he is pure:* and having laid hold on theſe promiſes, let us therefore cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit: 1 *Cor.* 7. 1. A Believer that hath this hope of Eternal Life cannot admit of any thing that defiles.

2. He that hath laid hold on this hope, is ſuch a one as hath a holy boldneſs, his *hope makes him not aſhamed:* Rom. 5. 5. And that

1. *To*

1. *Towards God:* 1 John 3. 21.

2. *For Gods Truth:* Phil. 1. 20.

3. *In the Day of Judgment:* 1 John 4. 17.

3. His Hope is intire and ſtands ſingle to God, diſclaiming all other Hopes, 1 *Cor.* 15. *If in this life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all men moſt miſerable.*

4. *He hopes againſt hope:* Rom. 4. 18, 19, Hab. 20. 3. 17.

5. *He that hath this hope in him is not barren or unfruitful:* 2 Pet. 1. 1. *But the God of all hope fills them with joy, ſo as they abound in hope.* Rom. 15. 13.

6. He who hath this bleſſed hope, is the moſt joyful Chriſtian: *The hope of the Righteous ſhall be glory*, ſaid *Solomon*: Prov. 10. 28. Light is ſown for the Righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart. The God of hope fills them with all joy and peace in believing. 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not ſeen, yet believing, rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.*

7. He that hath this hope hath the moſt contentment of any, all conditions are alike unto him; for his hope is not in this life, nor the things that concern it.

8. He who hath laid hold on this bleſſed hope, his heart is in Heaven, he is riſen with Chriſt, and his Affections are in Heaven. *His Converſation is in Heaven:* Phil. 3. 20 And they *declare plainly that they ſeek a better Country*, Heb. 11. 14, 15, 16. 9. He

9. He is one that hath an Eternal Eye, and sees things Eternal: *For hope that is seen is not hope:* Rom. 8. 4. And walks by Faith and not by sight.

10. He is one *who hopes to the end, and holds fast the confidence and rejoycing of the hope firm to the end:* Heb. 3. 6. *He girds up the loins of his mind, and hopes unto the end:* 1 Pet. 1. 13. He leaves not hoping and believing till he has received the end of his faith and hope, the salvation of his Soul: *He casts not away his Confidence, which to him is great recompence of reward:* Heb. 10. 35.

Wisdoms Hearers Blessed.

Prov. 8. 34.

Blessed is the man that heareth me, &c.

Divine Wisdom, or the Word of God, Gods Christ, Gods Spirit of Wisdom, by whom all things are made, hath by the same Word that said, *Let us make Man*, pronounced the same Man happy or blessed that heareth his word of VVisdom. *O Blessed is the Man, that since by his Transgression in hearkning to the voice of the Serpent, that beguil'd him and turn'd him away from Wisdoms voice, that made him and placed him in dominion over the work of his hands, and thereby was justly shut out of Gods Paradise into a toilsom, troublesom, tempting World; and*

into

on the power of darkneſs which firſt prevailed on him to ſtop his Ear to Heavens Voice, Divine Wiſdoms Counſel; and ſo thereby brought eternal Miſery upon him, and his poſterity, had not the ſame Wiſdom here appeared in the Humanity and in a Covenant of Life, whereby to direct Man where to regain his loſt Happineſs: which is by the hearkning to the Counſel of Chriſt and to the Call of Wiſdom to the Sons of Men. Read this, 8 *Chap.* from *verſ.* 1. to *verſ.* 14. And in the cloſe of his Call and invitation, he concludes it as a happineſs to hear him; *Bleſſed is the Man that heareth me*, &c.

Obſervation.

That Divine Wiſdoms hearers are bleſſed, or made bleſſed and happy in their hearing.

The moſt wiſe God by his holy Wiſdom makes his hearers happy, which is more than all the Worlds Wiſdom can do. The moſt wiſeſt, prudenteſt, holieſt, heavenlieſt Man that ever was, could never make his Diſciples, his Scholars, or Hearers happy; but Chriſt the Wiſdom and Power of God doth, *O the Bleſſedneſs of that Man that hears the word of God as Chriſt*; Gods wiſdom ſaid to the Woman when ſhe uttered that admiring Word or Speech, as to her apprehenſion of the infinite bleſſedneſs of the Humanity

manity: *Bleſſed is the Womb that bare thee and the Paps that gave thee ſuck: Yea rather Bleſſed is he that heareth the Word of God:* Luk. 11.28.

The truth of this will appear, if we conſider,

1. The things Wiſdom ſpeaks are all bleſſed things, tending to bleſſedneſs.

2. If we conſider how Wiſdom, or in what manner Wiſdom ſpeaks, they are bleſſed that hear.

1. What are thoſe bleſſed things that Wiſdom ſpeaks, which tends to make his hearers happy that hear them?

1. Wiſdom ſpeaks excellent words or things. *Hear, for I will ſpeak of Excellent things,* verſ. 6. and *Prov.* 22. 20. *Have not I Written to thee excellent things in Counſel and Knowledge.* Iſa. 12. 5. *The Lord hath done excellent things.* Wiſdom ſpeaks excellent things; things excelling all the Wiſdom, Counſel, Knowledge, Device of Men or Angels; ſuch things as will make the hearers be of an excellent Spirit, and ſhall be more excellent than their Neighbours. And the things that divine Wiſdom ſpeaks, do as much excel the Words of Mans Wiſdom as Heaven excels the Earth: *Yea, ſaith God, as high as the Heavens are from the Earth, ſo are my thoughts from your thoughts, O houſe of* Iſrael: The ſpeakings of the ſpirit of Wiſ-

dom do excel all that ever was ſpoken; Wiſdom ſpeaks of Glorious things, High things, Heavenly things, and things as makes the hearers thereof excellent in Wiſdom, Counſel, Underſtanding, and of an excellent Nature and Spirit. Therefore Wiſdoms Hearers muſt needs be happy and bleſſed in hearing.

2. Chriſt, Gods Wiſdom, ſpeaks to his Hearers *Right things*, verſe 6. *The opening of my mouth, ſhall be right things*, true things, faithful things, things of Truth. 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. *The Anointing teacheth all things, and is truth and is no lie.* What ever man ſpeaks, though ever ſo ſeemingly Truth, yet if not from the openings of Wiſdoms mouth, 'tis not right things, 'tis a lie. Wiſdom ſpeaks true ſayings, faithful ſayings: It is a word of Truth, and directs to Truth, and eſtabliſheth the hearers of it in Truth. *Holy Father, ſaith Chriſt, ſanctify them with thy Truth, thy word is Truth*, John 17. *All his words are ſpoken in Righteouſneſs*, This word of Truth guides all its Hearers and Diſciples into all Truth, and ſo makes them happy and bleſſed.

3. Chriſt, Gods Wiſdom, ſpeaks acceptable things to his Hearers and Diſciples; *The Preacher ſeeks out acceptable words*, Eccle. 12. 10. *Iſa.* 61. 1, 2. Tidings of good things, *Prov.* 25. 25. Good News from a far Country.

This

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came to save Sinners.

O how exceptable are Wisdoms sayings, very pleasing and acceptable to poor Souls; he speaks in an acceptable day, and acceptable things not to be gain-said! *O 'tis acceptable indeed, 'tis glad tidings:* What can be more acceptable to a hungry man than tell him where he shall have Bread; or to a Thirsty, to let let him know where's a Fountain; to the Condemned man a Pardon: Much more acceptable are the things of God, Christ, and Divine Wisdom, to the Obedient Hearer.

4. Wisdom speaks comfortable things to his Hearers, *Isa.* 40. *Speak comfortably to* Jerusalem, *tell her that her Warfare is accomplished, her Sins is pardoned, and she shall receive double at the Lords hands. Hence 'tis Christ told them he would send them the Spirit, the Comforter.* O the comfortable things that Wisdom speaks, the Spirit speaks. Read some of his comfortable savings: *Isa.* 54. 11. *O thou afflicted, tossed with Tempest and not comforted, behold I will lay thy Stones with fair colours*; Cap. 51. 3. *The Lord will comfort* Zion, *he will comfort all her waste places:* Cap. 66. 13. *As one whom his Mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.*

5. Wisdom speaketh to his hearers sutable and seasonable words or things, *Isa.* 50. 4. *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the*

earned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: Prov. 25. 11. *A word fitly spoken is like Apples of Silver in Pictures of Gold:* Christ, Gods Wisdom, speaks sutable things to the Conditions, Qualifications, and Capacities of his Hearers, and so he did in the days of his Flesh: *Mark* 4. 33. *With many such Parables spake he the word as they were able to bear it:* John 16. 12. *I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now; how be it, when he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth.*

6. Wisdom speaks to his Hearers plain things, *vers.* 9. of this 8. *Proverbs, They are all plain to him that understandeth; because it is given them as they are Wisdoms Disciples, to know the Misteries of the Kingdom,* Mat. 13. 11. *Hab.* 2. 2. *And the Lord said write the visions and make it plain upon Tables, that he may run that readeth it.*

7. Wisdom speaks to his Hearers eternal things, things of eternity, *John* 17. *This is life eternal to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ.*

The words I speak, said Christ, are Spirit and life.

This made *Simon Peter* say, *Lord whither should we go, thou hast the words of eternal life?* And Wisdooms Hearers must needs be eternally happy, because eternal life is spoken

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to them; *My Sheep hear my voice, ſaith Chriſt, they follow me, and I give unto them Eternal Life.*

2. *Conſideration.*

Chriſt, Gods Wiſdom, Divine Wiſdom, the ſpirit of Wiſdom, is to be conſidered how he ſpeaks, ſo as his Hearers are made happy in hearing him.

1. He ſpeaks Commandingly, with Authority, even in the ſame word of Power by which all things were made, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts*; and ſo this pure Wiſdom of God in the days of his Fleſh ſpake with Authority and not as the Scribes, and *Paul* in the meaſuring of this pure Wiſdom, *ſpake not in the words of Mans VViſdom, but in the demonſtration of the ſpirit and power*; 1 Cor. 2. 4. that ſo the Hearers Faith might not ſtand in the Wiſdom of man but in the power of God: and indeed here's the happineſs of the Words hearers above the Worlds hearers. The worlds faith, hope, confidence, grace, goodneſs, all ſtands in Man, and in the Kingdom of Man; but the heavenly words hearers hear that which is powerful, and ſo partake of the Kingdom which is not in word but in power.

2. Wiſdom ſpeaks convincingly, *John* 16. 8. *And when he, the ſpirit of truth is come, he will convince the World of Sin, Righteouſneſs,*

and Judgment; thus he ſpake convincingly to the *Jews*, John 8. *And they which heard it, being convicted by their own Conſciences went out one by one.*

3. Wiſdom ſpeaks convertingly, there is a converting power in his words, *Pſal.* 19. 7. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul, the Teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple.*

4. Wiſdom ſpeaks very affectionately to his Hearers, very wooingly, compaſſionately, *Prov.* 8. 8. *All the words of my mouth are in Righteouſneſs, there is nothing froward or perverſe in them.*

5. Wiſdom ſpeaks moſt wiſely, he is wiſe in Counſel, the everlaſting Counſellor; he is the Charmer that Charms wiſely. *Behold a greater than* Solomon *is here.* All that have an Ear to hear admire his Wiſdom, *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depth of the Riches both of the VViſdom and Knowledge of God: in him is hid the Treaſures of VViſdom and Knowledge,* Col. 3. 3.

Characters of Wiſdoms Hearers.

3. *Conſideration.*

Seeing Wiſdoms hearers are bleſſed in hearing, how may they be known and differenced? the Worlds hearers, and the Words hearers, Chriſts hearers from *Belials* hearers, Wiſdoms hearers from Fo[illegible]s hearers, or

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divine Wiſdoms hearers from humane Wiſdoms hearers? And they are known by theſe Notes or Characters.

1. Wiſdoms hearers are ready hearers; *Eccl.* 5. 1. *Be more ready to hear than to offer the Sacrifice of Fools.* James 1. 19. *Be ſwift to hear.* Wiſdoms hearers are more ready to hearken then to make a ſhew of ſervice; there's a forward Spirit in follies hearers, they would be doing ſomething; but to wait on Wiſdom how to be directed, they mind not.

2. Wiſdoms hearers are Attentive hearers, *Lydias heart was opened, and her heart opened her Ear ſo as ſhe was Attentive*, Acts 16. 14. The World hearers have their hearts and minds ſhut up to truth while they give only the Ear, and therefore they in hearing do not hear.

3. Wiſdoms hearers are Retentive hearers, they do retain what they hear, *and continue therein*; James 1. 25. *not being a forgetful hearer, ſuch ſhall be bleſſed in their hearing.*

Mary *was ſuch a one, ſhe pondred all Chriſts ſayings in her heart, ſhe hid the word in her heart, and Chriſt bid his Diſciples his hearers to let his ſayings ſink down into their hearts.* And ſuch are the happy hearers that receive the Seed of the Word into a good and honeſt heart, and there it takes its root downward, and brings forth its fruit upwards.

4. Wiſ-

4. Wiſdoms hearers are Apprehenſive hearers, *John* 10. *My Sheep hear my voice*, and Strangers they will not hear, they ſoon perceive the voice of Wiſdom, they are of a quick underſtanding, *the natural man perceiveth not the things of God; but the ſpiritual ſearches into the deep things of God*; they have their ſenſes exerciſed in diſcerning good from evil, and are not Children in underſtanding, but Men.

5. *They are reverent hearers, they tremble at the word*, Iſa. 66. 3. 5. *Such a one was* Mary *who ſat trembling at the feet of Jeſus*; Luk. 10. 39.

6. Wiſdoms hearers are Obedient hearers, *Iſa.* 50. 5. *I opened my Ear to hear and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back*; Prov. 25. 12. *So is a wiſe reproof to an Obedient Ear.*

7. Wiſdoms hearers are Circumciſed hearers, they have the dull buſie itching Ear cut away; *Jer.* 4. 4. and 6. 10.

8. VViſdoms hearers are very ſilent hearers, no great noiſe of Profeſſion or outward Formality do they make, but in the ſtilneſs and ſilence of their Hearts, do they hearken what God the Lord will ſpeak unto them, *They are the good wiſe Women that learn in ſilence*, 1 Tim. 2. 11.

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